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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study described in this report was to ascertain why students in New York City high schools are earning insufficient credits to graduate in four years. Specific objectives of the study include the following: (1) to identify patterns and trends in credit accumulation among high school graduates and dropouts; (2) to determine and analyze the prevalence of noncredit bearing courses in students' schedules; (3) to identify New York State, Chancellor's, and High School Division regulations, requirements, policies, and practices that significantly affect student programs and course credit accumulation; (4) to identify innovative practices in program structure and scheduling that might improve credit accumulation; and (5) to determine the quantity and impact of assistance provided to students in course selection. The main report contains a summary; a section of background information; and sections on the study purpose, study methodology, and study findings. Based on the findings, the report concludes with the following recommendations: (1) beginning in the ninth grade, the school system should systematically provide students, parents, and schools with the number of credits accumulated and the number needed for graduation, as well as how each student compares to others at the same level; (2) more funds and remedial resources should be directed to pre-high school and ninth-grade programs; (3) programs to promote credit accumulation should be studied so that successful programs can be replicated and unsuccessful ones phased out; (4) the student's accumulation of credits should not depend on the high school he/she happens to attend; and (5) the Board of Education should establish a citywide policy on credit accumulation. Appendixes include the study instruments and responses; a summary of follow-up interviews; and the pertinent Commissioner's and Chancellor's regulations. (MYM)

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HANGING IN:
A STUDY OF STUDENT CREDIT ACCUMULATION IN HIGH SCHOOLS

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HANGING IN:
A STUDY OF STUDENT CREDIT ACCUMULATION IN HIGH SCHOOLS

1990

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for the
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

I. Introduction.. 3

II. Acknowledgements................................... 4

III. Summary... 6

IV. Credit Accumulation: Background....................11

V. Purpose of Study....................................15

VI. Methodology....................................... 16

VII. Findings... 18

- A. Enrollment Beyond Four Years..................18
- B. Dichotomous Views.............................22
- C. High Rate of Course Failure...................24
- D. State Mandates................................25
- E. Entering Students.............................28
- F. Student and Family Factors 30
- G. Structural Factors............................32
- H. Other School Factors..........................34
- I. Strategies to Improve Credit Accumulation.....36

VIII. Conclusions and Recommendations..................38

IX. Endnotes.. 42

X. Appendices
- A. List of EPP Member Agencies
- B. Superintendent's Questionnaire
- C. Principal's Questionnaire
- D. Counselor's Questionnaire
- E. The View from Headquarters
- F. Superintendents' Responses
- G. Principals' Responses
- H. Counselors' Responses
- I. Interviews of Principals and Counselors
- J. ConCurrent Options
- K. Section 100.5 of the Commissioner's Regulations
- L. Chancellor's Regulation--Students Volume Update No. 13 1987-1988
- M. ConCurrent Options Programming School Year 1988-1989 Survey, Observations and Recommendations

I. INTRODUCTION

The Student Credit Accumulation Study

This report describes a study conducted by Perry Davis Associates (PDA) for the Educational Priorities Panel to determine why a large number and percentage of New York City public high school students do not earn sufficient credits to receive a high school diploma within four years. In doing so, EPP recognizes that accumulating credits is an element of a broader issue--achievement in high school, but it is nevertheless an important element and an excellent means of discovering how well students are doing.

Goals of EPP

The Educational Priorities Panel (EPP) is a coalition of 27 organizations (see Appendix A for complete list) whose goal is to improve public education for New York City's children by developing and supporting an agenda of educational priorities. Specifically, the Panel acts as an advocate for the allocation of adequate funds for the New York City public school system and for the equitable distribution of those funds. EPP works to ensure that the largest share of dollars is devoted to instruction and other direct services for children. The Panel monitors the management and use of funds at the system, school and classroom level.

How Does EPP Work

The Educational Priorities Panel consists of a broad spectrum of citizens, parent and good government groups representing the City's diverse ethnic and minority populations public school parents and other citizen perspectives. They include advocacy groups dedicated to meeting the needs of all children, family and neighborhood service groups and groups constituted expressly to improve the public schools. These organizations pool their unique and diverse insights and expertise in the development of EPP policy.

Under the leadership of Chairperson Dr. Luis Reyes of ASPIRA and Ms. Noreen Connell, EPP Executive Director, members meet every other week to determine Panel direction and policies. They report back to the 27 constituent organizations and to the community at large; they help City residents participate in educational planning knowledgeably and effectively. Separate committees review research, monitor school activities and issue reports to the public.

II. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This research study was conducted by the New York City based consulting firm of Perry Davis Associates (PDA). The project director and researcher was Dr. Bernard Esrig, Vice-President, PDA. In addition to high school superintendents, principals and guidance personnel who responded to a questionnaire survey and telephone interviews, the persons listed below were interviewed and provided valuable information.

Central Headquarters Interviewees
Division of High Schools

Jacqueline Charity	Deputy Director, Office of Access and Compliance
Larry Edwards	Director, Office of Access and Compliance
Peter Engel	Executive Assistant to the Executive Director
Joe Fisler	Superintendent of Operations
Steve Phillips	H.S. Superintendent, Alternative Schools and Programs
Dov Rokeach	Director, H.S. Special Education Operations
Carmen Russo	Executive Director of High Schools
Joseph R. Salvati	Project Director, Office of ConCurrent Options Programming
Norman Wexler	Special Assistant to the Executive Director

Other Headquarters Personnel

Gary Bergman	Deputy Director, H.S. Operations, Office of Educational Data Services
Eli Plotnick	Senior Assistant to the Chief Executive for Instruction
Nilda Soto-Ruiz	Chief Executive for Instruction
Robert Tobias	Director, Office of Research, Evaluation & Assessment
Wayne Trigg	Director, Office of Educational Data Services
Lynne Savage	Senior Assistant to the Deputy Chancellor

Former Headquarters Personnel

Frank Smith	Former Executive Director of High Schools now Professor of Educational Administration, Teachers College, Columbia University

III. Summary

This is a report based on an EPP commissioned and designed study to find out why many New York City public high school students are failing to earn a sufficient number of credits to graduate within four years.

The specific objectives of this study included:

1. identifying patterns and trends in credit accumulation among students,
2. determining the prevalence of non-credit bearing courses in students' schedules,
3. identifying State, Chancellor's and Division of High Schools' regulations, policies or practices which significantly affect student programs and course credit accumulation,
4. identifying innovative programs and structures and
5. determining the quantity and impact of assistance provided to students in course selection.

The methodology employed in this study involved:

1. a review of relevant State, Board of Education and High School Division regulations and requirements,
2. analysis of computer generated and manual data concerning credit accumulation and related information,
3. interviews with present and former key officials of the High School Division,
4. a questionnaire survey of all high school superintendents, principals and one guidance counselor in each high school and
5. telephone interviews with selected principals and guidance counselors.

The data gathered through these means were analyzed and findings, conclusions and recommendations for action prepared.

The major findings and conclusions of this study are:

1. **There is no citywide policy concerning high school credit accumulation and promotion credit, number of courses a student may take and electives.**

2. **No reliable data were available on a citywide basis, by school or by grade on student credit accumulation.** In addition, there are no reliable data which show the impact of slow credit accumulation (and course failure) in early high school grades on continuing beyond the fourth year or dropping out. The only data available dealt with related issues including the number of students remaining in high school for more than four years and course failure information.

3. One in four students in the City's public high schools does not accumulate sufficient credit to graduate in four years and is enrolled for a fifth year. Some school officials believe this situation is evidence of school failure. Others view it as a responsible way by which students entering the high schools with serious educational handicaps can receive an adequate education.

4. The annual cost of having high school students enrolled for more than four years is $150 to $200 million.

5. The major cause for lack of credits, as expected, is course failure. During the fall, 1989, preliminary data indicate that almost two-thirds of all students failed one or more courses and one-third failed three or more courses.

6. State mandates have made credit accumulation much more difficult. These mandates include: a) Regents Competency Tests (RCTs) in six different areas, b) a requirement that a student must be enrolled in a remediation course for each RCT failed until he or she passes it and c) increased subject sequences.

7. The entering classes of a substantial number of high schools show major academic deficits and attendance problems. For example, some schools have entering classes with these characteristics: (1) more than 50 percent of the students are overage, (2) more than 75 percent achieved below the 50th percentile in the State's Degrees of Reading Power examination and the Metropolitan Achievement Mathematics Test, (3) student attendance in the previous spring was less than 80 percent and (4) more than 25 percent of the students were absent 21 or more days in the spring.

8. Respondents generally agreed that students' inadequate preparation for high school work, personal and family problems, need to work, poor motivation and lack of attendance were the principal causes of insufficient credit accumulation. They did not believe that school policies or practices themselves were significant causes. **Yet, schools differ on whether to give credit for remediation courses, the programs they used to assist students having difficulty accumulating credit, the number of courses a student may take and the amount of semester or annual credit for passing course sequences. The result of these structural differences is that it is easier to earn credits in some schools than in others.**

9. The school system is currently establishing systems to produce and analyze data on student credit accumulation on a citywide, school and grade basis and to better inform students and parents of credits earned and still required for graduation. New systems will be able to show the impact of insufficient student credit accumulation during the first, second or third

years of high school on continuing in high school beyond four years and on the dropout problem.

10. The high schools are using a variety of means to address insufficient credit accumulation. The major initiative is the ConCurrent Options Program, which provides ten different approaches to helping students earn more credits. Some components have been in existence for more than 50 years (e.g., evening high schools); others were initiated only three years ago (e.g., P.M. schools). More than 50,000 students attend and earn credit. The total budget for the 10 components is approximately $30 million or about three percent of the $920 million High School Division budget. Also, the High School Division is planning to institute in all high schools major orientation programs for students and their parents prior to the first day of school in fall, 1990.

11. Significantly, for the most part, programs designed to speed along student credit accumulation are not uniformly inventoried, monitored and evaluated, and this information is thus not publicly disseminated. There is no objective analysis that could lead to the identification of successful programs.

The Educational Priorities Panel recommends that the school system take the following action:

1. The High School Division should make every effort to utilize data maintained by the Office of Educational Data Services (the Biofile) and the City University's University Application Processing Center (UAPC) as well as data in schools to:

   a. provide, in a systematic manner, beginning in the ninth grade, all students and their parents, as well as schools, with complete information on how many credits students have accumulated, how many more are required for graduation and where the students stand in comparison to other students at the same level in their school and in the City.

   b. analyze the numerous variables affecting student credit accumulation, such as practices concerning partial course credit, ninth grade Houses, transfers out of vocational high schools and City regulations such as foreign language and five period gym requirements.

   c. determine what correlations exist among course failure rates, credit accumulation problems in ninth and tenth grades and dropping out of high school.

2. The Board of Education should direct more dollars and remedial resources to pre-high school and ninth grade programs. The school system is spending annually between $150 and $200 million of its $920 million high school budget to educate students enrolled for a fifth, sixth and seventh year. Greater emphasis in three areas are proposed:

> a. To ensure student success in the ninth grade there should be increased focus on articulation programs (efforts facilitating student academic and social transition from district schools to high schools) with intermediate and junior high schools during the spring semester prior to entering high school.
>
> b. A major transition program for entering high school students during the summer should be instituted. It would provide opportunities to assess needs, begin skills remediation, emphasize high school study and test taking methodologies, involve parents and set the scene for more intensive support work in the ninth grade for those who require it.
>
> c. Counseling and related support from other agencies (e.g., medical screening and treatment, work support for parents and older siblings) should be "front loaded" during the transition summer and the ninth grade.

3. Programs designed to promote student credit accumulation should be inventoried, monitored and evaluated. These data should then be publicly disseminated. This process should lead to an objective analysis (educational and cost/benefit) of successful programs and the phase out of programs which produce few benefits.

4. The pace of a student's credit accumulation must not be dependent on the practices of the particular school attended. Some high schools, but clearly not all, are utilizing a variety of approaches to address slow credit accumulation which do not necessarily lower promotion or graduation standards. These include: a) injecting subject matter curriculum into remedial course work and thereby permitting credit to be granted for the course, b) providing full credit for a one year sequence in which the first half is failed but the second half is passed, c) designing flexible, modular scheduling, which may be administratively burdensome, but apparently successful in allowing students to accumulate many credits in short periods of time and d) using P.M. school to meet remediation requirements. These practices raise significant policy issues. They should be reviewed for their citywide implications and decisions concerning

their use incorporated in new policy formulation. Certainly the lack of policy allowing such divergent approaches is not useful for the students or parents. To reiterate, the rate of credit accumulation should not depend on the whims of a school and thus on a school selection made in 8th grade by a student. The issue should be much more uniformly addressed.

5. A comprehensive citywide policy on credit accumulation must be established. This policy must be flexible enough to permit the use of successful alternatives by individual schools. These alternatives must be backed by sound analysis and closely monitored and evaluated for measurable results.

IV. Credit Accumulation: Background

Requirements

To graduate from a New York City public high school and thereby earn a diploma, a student must complete 20 units by meeting requirements that include a) Required Subject Areas, b) Unit Sequences and c) Free Electives (a unit of credit is equivalent to one year or two terms of instruction):

a) Required Subject Areas	**Units**
English	4
Social Studies	4
Science	2
Mathematics	2
Humanities	2
Health and Physical Education	1/2
	Total: 14 1/2

In addition, a student must complete one of the following unit sequence choices which overlap the required subject areas above.

b) Unit Sequences **2-5 Units**

two three-unit sequences in mathematics, science, a second language, art or music or

one five unit sequence in English or social studies and one three unit sequence in mathematics, science, a second language, occupational education, art or music or

one five unit sequence in mathematics, science, a second language, occupational education, art or music

For example, if a student selects one five unit sequence in English and one three unit sequence in mathematics, he or she will have to complete one more unit in English (because he or she had to take 4 units above) and one more unit in mathematics (because he or she had to take 2 units above).

c) Free Electives **1/2-3 1/2** Units

Remaining units are available as free electives. In the example above, the student will be able to take 3 1/2 units in electives (Subject areas:14 1/2 + Unit Sequences:2 = 16 1/2 leaving 3 1/2 units as electives).

Credits and Units

In the New York City public high schools the term "credit" is used to denote one term of instruction. Two credits are equivalent to one unit. And therefore 40 credits (or 20 units) are required to obtain a diploma.

Regents Competency Tests (RCTs)

To graduate a student must also reach an established level of competency on six RCTs: Reading, Writing, Mathematics, Science, American History and Government and Global Studies.

Regents' Diploma

To earn a Regents' endorsed diploma, a student must meet the above noted requirements (except the RCTs for which the Regents Examinations are substituted) and pass the following Regents examinations: English, American History and Government, Second Language, Mathematics (two examinations), Science (two examinations), Global Studies and one in subject selected in area of concentration.[1]

This study focuses on those students who are not accumulating sufficient credit (40 credits or 20 units) to obtain a diploma in four years.

Focus on Dropouts

With high school dropout rates averaging more than 30 percent during the past few decades, schools have focused their efforts, time and money on keeping potential dropouts in school. Less attention has been devoted to those students who actually continued in high school beyond the expected four years--five, six and even seven years.

Board of Education Studies Have Changed the Focus

The Cohort Reports of June, 1988 and April, 1989 by the Board of Education's Office of Research, Evaluation and Assessment spotlight students still enrolled in schools after four years. The April, 1989 study found:

> One-fourth of the Class of 1988 was still enrolled in high school on June 30, 1988.
>
> Almost 75 percent of still-enrolled students were in eleventh or twelfth grade; about 40 percent of the still-enrolled students were attending school on a regular basis during the 1987-88 school year.

> Over 10 percent of the Class of 1987 was still enrolled for a sixth year of high school. Almost 70 percent of these students were in eleventh or twelfth grade.
>
> Only 5 percent of the Class of 1986 was still enrolled in high school on June 30, 1988.[2]

Five percent, however, is not inconsiderable. It amounts to 3,931 students--equivalent to the total enrollment of two average size New York City high schools. A small fraction of these 3,931 students may have enrolled for an eighth year (data were not available).

A Historical Perspective

Enrollment of substantial numbers of students in high school for more than four years is not a new phenomenon. A perusal of Superintendent's annual reports reveals that many high school graduates in the 1930's and 1940's had attended high school for more than four years. For example, an examination of 1940-41 data discloses that about 25 percent of the students received their diplomas after age 18 with some receiving diplomas as late as age 25.[3]

Other school systems are encountering the same problem. For example, a recent report by the Philadelphia public schools indicated that 12 percent of its high school class of 1988 were still enrolled in the district during the 1988-89 school year.[4]

Schools are beginning to pay more attention to students who are enrolled beyond the four years.

Students as Productive Citizens

A confluence of many factors is causing educators and others interested in education to pay greater attention to causes of success and failure in New York City's public high schools. These factors include (1) deleterious effects of the high dropout rate (28 to 35 percent depending on the methodology used) on the dropouts themselves and the rest of society, (2) the high percentage of graduates requiring remedial work in reading and mathematics when they enroll in the City University's two or four year colleges and perhaps most significantly, (3) job requirements demanding knowledge, skills and attitudes which the public, particularly the business community, believe should be learned and developed by students while in high school.

These factors are reinforced by the recognition that the 15 to 24 year age group is the smallest in decades and that its energy and intelligence must be nurtured and harnessed to its fullest potential. More than ever, high schools are being called upon to effectively and efficiently (i.e., in four years) prepare students to be economically and socially productive citizens.

Dichotomous Views

The phenomenon of students enrolled in high school for a fifth, sixth and seventh year is viewed by some as confirmation of the failure of the high schools to effectively and efficiently carry out their responsibilities. Others see this as evidence that the high schools are seriously addressing the needs of at-risk and other students. Therefore, the Educational Priorities Panel decided to study (1) why so many students are not accumulating a sufficient number of credits to graduate in four years and (2) what might be done to help students accumulate credits at a faster rate.

V. PURPOSE OF STUDY

As noted earlier, the primary purpose of this study was to ascertain why students are earning insufficient credits to graduate from high school in four years.

EPP recognizes that accumulating credits alone does not guarantee that students will have attained the multiple goals of a high school education. However, accumulating credits, particularly in appropriate sequences, provides some evidence of learning. It is therefore important to ascertain if and why high school students are not accumulating credits toward a diploma.

The specific objectives of the study are:

1. To identify patterns and trends in credit accumulation among high school graduates and dropouts.

2. To determine and analyze the prevalence of non-credit bearing courses in students' schedules.

3. To identify New York State, Chancellor's and High School Division regulations, requirements, policies and practices which significantly affect student programs and course credit accumulation.

4. To identify innovative practices in program structure and scheduling which might improve credit accumulation.

5. To determine the quantity and impact of assistance provided to students in course selection.

VI. METHODOLOGY

The following describes the methodology used in this study:

1. On behalf of EPP, Perry Davis Associates (PDA) reviewed relevant New York State (Section 100.5 of the Commissioner's Regulations) and Chancellor's (Chancellor's Regulation A-502) regulations and High School Division graduation requirements to determine their effect on course accumulation.

2. It collected and analyzed data on incoming high school students, failure rates, reports by the Board's Office of Research, Evaluation and Assessment and pertinent memos concerning dropout programs.

3. PDA interviewed key individuals in the central offices of the Division of High Schools, others thoroughly familiar with the operations of the high schools, two former Executive Directors of the Division and administrators responsible for gathering student data. These interviews were designed to (1) obtain clarifications of high school requirements, (2) find out how central headquarters staff view the course accumulation issue, (3) secure feedback on the questionnaire survey of field staff and (4) obtain summary and trend data on student course accumulation.

4. The Council of Supervisors and Administrators reviewed the principal questionnaire. As a result some minor revisions were made.

5. PDA conducted a mail survey of six high school superintendents and 137 New York City high school principals and guidance counselors (see Appendices B, C, and D for questionnaires). As of April 6, 1990 completed surveys had been returned by 88 principals, 78 counselors and six superintendents. In a few cases designees of principals and superintendents responded. These survey forms were used for the analysis. Respondents had the option of identifying themselves or remaining anonymous. Ninety percent of the principals and 78 percent of the counselors identified themselves. A comparison (using a chi square statistical test) between the responses of those who identified themselves and those who chose to remain anonymous indicated that there were minimum statistical or meaningful differences in the responses between the two groups. Therefore, the answers by both groups were combined.

The relatively high response rate, 60 percent of the principals and 57 percent of the counselors, supports the reliance on their responses as representative of the views of New York City high school principals and the counselors principals consider most knowledgeable in this area.

6. PDA conducted phone interviews with eight principals and seven counselors requesting that they elaborate upon their responses to the questionnaire responses.

7. Data acquired were analyzed and conclusions and recommendations prepared for consideration by the Educational Priorities Panel.

VII. FINDINGS

The findings of the various phases of this study are presented below. The accumulated data and information indicate that there is no clear consensus by educational professionals as to the magnitude of the impact of inadequate student credit accumulation. The survey of superintendents showed a 50-50 split as to whether the issue was "a problem in your borough." Forty-five percent of principals thought it was a "serious problem" in their schools, 24.4 percent considered it "no problem" and 30.5 percent considered it a "minor problem."

A. Enrollment Beyond Four Years

Regular Students

The advent of a computerized student educational status record keeping system (called the Biofile and maintained by the Office of Educational Data Services for all students) in the City's high schools in 1981-82 has greatly improved the quality of data concerning dropouts. At the same time it has provided startling and somewhat unexpected data on students enrolling in high school beyond four years. In tracking each student from the day he or she entered a public school, including the high schools, the Biofile has increased the credibility of data on the status of all high school students.

For three years, the Board's Office of Research, Evaluation, and Assessment, using the Biofile has issued reports indicating that one-fourth of the City's high school students continue to enroll and generally attend school for a fifth year, with smaller percentages being enrolled for a sixth and seventh year.

The chart below shows that 3,272 (32,582 minus 29,310=3,272) students graduated after five years of high school and that 6,092 (38,674 minus 32,582=6,092) graduated after six years. The dropout rate, on the other hand, increased by 4.6 percent between the end of the fourth year of high school and the end of the fifth year (26.4 minus 21.8 = 4.6), whereas, the dropout rate increased only by .9 percent between the end of the fifth year and the end of the sixth year (27.3 minus 26.4 = .9).

However, the chart also indicates that even after six years in school, 3,931 (5.5 percent) of the original 71,484 students making up the class of 1986 were enrolled for a seventh year. A quarter of the still-enrolled students (the 3,931) had recorded attendance during the 1987-88 school year. Eleven percent were in the 11th or 12th grades and were absent fewer than 21 days during spring, 1988. This group had a good chance of completing their requirements and obtaining the appropriate number of credits.[5]

Class of 1986

Four-Year, Five- and Six-Year Status

	Year of Study					
	Year 4		**Year 5**		**Year 6**	
Status	N	%	N	%	N	%
Dropouts	15,602	21.8	18,888	26.4	19,515	27.3
Graduates and other School Completers*	29,310	41.0	32,582	45.6	38,674	54.1
Transferred Out and Other Discharges	8,754	12.3	9.083	12.7	9,364	13.1
Students Still Enrolled**	17,818	24.9	10,931	15.3	3,931	5.5
Total	71,484	100.0	71,484	100.0	71,484	100.0

*Includes students who received General Equivalency Diplomas (GEDs).

**These students are still enrolled on June 30 of each year and attend summer school or continue in the fall and/or spring term of the next school year (e.g., on June 30, 1986, 17,818 students did not graduate in June of that year but were still enrolled in high school and continued to be enrolled for a fifth year of high school). This also includes students of unknown status.

The high school class of 1987 shows a similar profile with 21,930 or 26.8 percent of its class of 81,847 students enrolled for a fifth year. The percentage for the class of 1988 dropped to 25.2 percent. The chart below, organized by responsible area of a high school superintendent, indicates only small changes in percentages between students in the classes of 1987 and 1988 who were still enrolled on June 30, 1987 and June 30, 1988, respectively. As expected, Alternative High School students, who have frequently failed to accumulate sufficient credits in other high schools are staying in school longer.[6]

Comparison of Class of '87 with Class of '88

	Class of '87 Still Enrolled on June 30, 1987*	Class of '88 Still Enrolled on June 30, 1988
Manhattan	2,599 (23.9%)	2,848 (24.8%)
Bronx	3,491 (26.3%)	3,525 (27.2%)
Brooklyn	3,292 (25.9%)	2,987 (23.7%)
BASIS**	3,120 (26.4%)	2,920 (25.0%)
Queens	3,950 (22.2%)	4,119 (22.6%)
Alternative High Schools	1,161 (39.2%)	1,261 (38.6%)

*Incomplete data
** Brooklyn and Staten Island Schools

Nor is this condition limited to schools with low achieving, at-risk students. For example, 20 percent (627 of 3183 students) of the 1988 class of four specialized high schools (Bronx High School of Science, Brooklyn Technical High School, F.H.LaGuardia High School and Stuyvesant High School), for which there are highly competitive entrance examinations, did not graduate in June, 1988. Some of these students undoubtedly had to complete examinations or other tasks during the summer of 1988. Others had to continue in the fall term.

The range among all city high schools was wide, from 3.2 percent to 40.7 percent (excluding alternative and very small schools). The range among zoned or comprehensive high schools even within an area supervised by one superintendent was substantial. For example, the range in the Bronx was from 20.9 percent to 40.7 percent; in Queens it was from 11.9 percent to 32.9 percent. It is interesting to note and it may be significant that in all boroughs, the percentage of students still enrolled on June 30, 1988 was greater than the four year percentage of dropouts for those boroughs. Fifth year students may be claimed as one piece of evidence that dropout prevention programs are succeeding at least with students who haven't accumulated sufficient credits to graduate.[7]

Special Education Students

Special education students have remained enrolled in high school beyond four years at much higher rates. For example, 58 percent (4,586 students) of the class of 1988 was enrolled for a fifth year. Thirty-two percent of the class of 1986 was enrolled for a seventh year in high school. Many of these students and regular students were 21 years old in 1989 or earlier and "aged out" of the school system (i.e., left the public schools because of age) without having graduated, dropped out or transferred.[8]

Costs

Costs of educating fifth, sixth and seventh year regular high school students are considerable as the chart below shows. At an average annual cost per student of $5,973, **the estimated cost is $195,197,640**. This is an estimate because some of the students drop out or are discharged before the end of the school year and the average annual cost changes each year. In addition, it does not include Special Education students at an average annual cost of $13,824.[9]

Cost of Students Enrolled Beyond Four Years
Class of 1986

	Enrolled for a Fifth Year	**Enrolled for a Sixth Year**	**Enrolled for a Seventh Year**
Students	17,818	10,931	3,931
Costs	$106,426,914	$65,290,863	$23,479,863

B. Dichotomous Views

Most interviewees took the view that students attending school for more than four years was not desirable; however, it was prudent and productive to have them do so. A few examples of this view are noted below:

> We cannot maintain four years as being the standard for all students. Remediation and poor attendance plus increased Regents Action Plan requirements make it impossible for many students. Immigrant students pose another situation. We have no problem with lengthening the school stay as needed but the school is cited unfavorably. Somebody should take an historic look at earlier waves of immigration and the unique position of New York City.
>
> Why not examine how many students coming from community JHS and IS are not adequately prepared to do HS work? What's wrong with students taking more than four years to finish high school? You make it sound that the high schools are to be faulted for this. With all the pressures on HS students, those who take more than four years to graduate, schools should be congratulated for not giving up on them.
>
> Take the view that four years is not necessarily possible for all students and that five is OK if students are getting proper support and are mastering what they need to be functioning in our economy and society.
>
> The school system should reconsider the pressure to complete high school in four years. The focus is now on deficits. The focus should be on tasks to be accomplished in high school, not on why or whether the student is in school. The aim should be continuous progress toward a diploma. **(This and other comments by questionnaire respondents and interviewees are in Appendices E-I.)**

For many students, particularly those in the bottom 50 percent academically, dropping out or staying in high school for more than four years are their clearest educational alternatives.

On the other hand, some educators viewed the phenomenon of students enrolled in high schools for a fifth, sixth and seventh year as confirmation of the failure of the City's high schools to effectively and efficiently carry out their responsibilities. These educators expressed concern that the public also held this view.

Those who view it as a serious problem assert that the high schools are sending the wrong message to students. They believe that this message is that it is acceptable for students to dawdle in high school. One interviewee summarized it this way:

> There is tremendous inefficiency in terms of costs, time and productivity having students attend school for more than four years.

The same respondent noted that the extra time was generally not for the purpose of providing a more enriched education, as is often the case in other nations, but for the purpose of dealing with failure.

C. High Rate of Course Failure

The major and obvious reason that many students do not accumulate sufficient credits to graduate in four years is course failure. The extent of course failure is staggering. The following data are from a preliminary Board of Education study of course failure in the high schools in the fall of 1989:

- **One-third of students failed three or more courses in the fall term.**
- **Almost two-thirds of all students failed one or more courses.**
- **The percentage of students in individual high schools who failed three or more courses ranged from 0.6 to 54.3.**
- **Ten percent of students in four specialized high schools failed three or more courses.**
- **The pass rate for all students ranged from 64.2 percent in mathematics to 79.2 percent in art/music. Perhaps of greater significance was the range for the ninth grade--from 57.6 percent in mathematics to 73.1 percent in art/music.**[10]

Even if these preliminary data underestimate the pass rate and overstate the failure rate by 10 to 20 percent (highly unlikely), it is clear that the City's high schools face an exceptionally difficult task in helping students to earn sufficient credits to graduate within four years.

Questionnaire and interview comments clearly emphasize the impact of these course failures:

> Many students have poor attendance and fail courses, not because of absenteeism, per se, but because of failure to meet class, homework or test requirements.
>
> Students who pass subjects in 9th and 10th grades successfully complete high school. Students who fail subjects in 9th and 10th grades leave the trade school and take other programs elsewhere.

D. State Mandates

Regents Competency Tests

As noted above, City public high school students must pass six Regents Competency Tests to graduate and receive a diploma. It should be clear that failure to pass these RCTs prevents a student from graduating, even if he or she has passed all required courses. Furthermore, the State requires that a student who fails an RCT be enrolled in a remedial program until he or she passes that RCT. This places the student in non-credit or 1/2 credit courses, making it difficult to accumulate sufficient credits to graduate. It is instructive to examine the City's RCT pass rates over the past few years remembering that every student who fails must be enrolled in a remedial course for each RCT he or she fails.[11]

Regents Competency Tests--Pass Rates

	1986	1987	1988	1989
Reading	83%	83%	82%	84%
Writing	77%	69%	71%	71%
Mathematics	54%	59%	65%	56%
Science			67%	50%

While the State does not specify at which grade students should take an RCT, the City does. For example, students are eligible to take the mathematics RCT in June of grade 9. In general, by allowing and encouraging students to take the RCTs before the senior year, the City gives students the opportunity to re-take an examination should they fail the first time.

The questionnaire responses exhibit an interesting divergence of views. Most high school superintendents and principals indicated that the RCTs in the skill areas, reading, mathematics and writing, had positive or neutral effects on student credit accumulation. This was in contrast to their view of the RCTs in content areas, American history and government, science and global studies. Most felt that these RCTs had (or will have) an adverse effect on credit accumulation (to be accurate, the State will first give the global studies RCT in 1990-1991; school administrators are looking ahead with anxiety). Significantly, less than 10 percent of the principals believed that any of the RCTs had a positive effect on credit accumulation.(See Appendices F and G.)

Remediation Courses

Students who fail an RCT must be enrolled in remediation courses until they pass the RCT. In addition, high school students who scored in the lowest quartile in the Degrees of

Reading Power (DRP) examination or the Metropolitan Achievement Test-Mathematics in intermediate school are also placed in some type of remedial program.

In contrast to their mixed views on the effect of RCTs on credit accumulation, all of the superintendents and two-thirds of the principals believed that remedial instruction for those failing RCTs adversely affects credit accumulation. Conceivably, the principals who believed that it has no effect or has a positive effect either had few students who failed RCTs or developed remediation programs with full credit.

Most superintendents and principals also believed that the scheduling of remedial and other non-credit courses was a major barrier to credit accumulation. However, less than 30 percent of the counselors thought this was a major barrier. The difference in views may have been due to the counselors' frame of reference which focused on programming of individual students while the administrators viewed scheduling as a school-wide issue with budgetary implications. (See Appendices F, G and H.)

Many schools have developed creative solutions to the problem of non-credit remediation courses. These courses have evolved in most high schools into 1/4 to full credit courses, with the approval of the State Education Department, by the incorporation of subject content in the courses and thereby crediting the course toward subject requirements.

Interviewees and questionnaire respondents expressed very negative views of the remediation requirements. Some typical comments:

> **State regulations prohibiting full credit for remedial courses taken as a result of low DRP or MAT math scores in the intermediate school or failure of an RCT force some students to take up to three periods a day in non- or 1/2 credit bearing courses, clearly an obstacle to graduation in four years.**
>
> Some schools grant partial credit for courses: that is, by completing some requirements for a course the student obtains fractional credit. There is no citywide policy concerning partial credit.
>
> It is often necessary to postpone required courses/sequences to make room on students' programs for remediation and/or ESL instruction.
>
> Use P.M. school for remedial instruction or students stay an extra period.

In addition to remediation courses, some students needing special education services are required by the State to attend resource room programs once or twice a week. These programs focus on reading, mathematics and writing. They also carry no credit. Schools have addressed the credit issue by scheduling students to attend resource room programs during one or two of the physical education periods. The student is still able to meet the State requirement of three periods of gym a week, which is less than the City's requirement of five periods a week.

Mandated Courses and Sequences

As noted above in the section on high school graduation requirements, a student is required by the State to complete a series of unit sequences and courses. Approximately two-thirds of both superintendents and principals believed that additional unit sequences required by the State have adversely affected credit accumulation. For example, they found the increase of social studies courses to four units burdensome. Interviewees noted, in particular, their objection to the "Introduction to Occupations" course and test which respondents found useless.

> There are too many mandated courses, including the (school omitted) technicians program that is the equivalent of 24 credits, for students in need of remediation to hope to finish high school in four years.

> Credit accumulation is not synonymous with meeting graduation requirements. Sequencing of courses, while not a credit accumulation problem, is a problem for some students with respect to meeting graduation requirements.

E. Entering Students

The Office of Educational Data Services issues two other reports which contribute to an understanding of delayed credit accumulation. The first, the G-1 report, provides profiles of entering classes of every high school. The second, the G-2 report, provides a three year profile of the entering class of every high school. The profiles include aggregate data on the number and percentage of overage students, gender, achievement data in reading and mathematics, absenteeism, acceleration tests passed (tests taken in intermediate or junior high schools, which, if passed, allow a student to enroll in more advanced high school classes) and students with limited English proficiency (LEP) entitled to special services.[12]

Overage Students

About 15 percent of students who entered high school in the fall of 1989 were one or more years overage. The range among schools, however, was very wide. For example, one school's incoming class was 60 percent overage. Another school within the same borough had an entering class which was only 12 percent overage. Many of these students had failed courses in lower grades and entered high school with reading and mathematic deficits.

Academic Problems

A substantial number and percentage of students enter high school with serious academic problems that require them to attend non- or low credit remediation programs. In many cases their deficits are so severe that it is difficult for them to succeed in the regular high school program. For example, 8,834 of 48,237 (18 percent) entering regular education students in the fall of 1989, for whom there were scores, were in the 1-24 percentile range in the DRP reading test. Also, 11,053 (30 percent) of 37,488 entering regular education students, for whom there were scores, were in the 1-24 percentile range, the bottom quartile.

The two schools mentioned above demonstrate the range in achievement. In one school, 76 percent achieved below the 50th percentile in the DRP examination and 88 percent achieved below the 50th percentile in the MAT mathematics examination. In the other school, only 19 percent achieved below the 50th percentile in the DRP examination and only 29 percent achieved below the 50th percentile in the MAT mathematics test. It follows that the students in the first school are going to find it more difficult to accumulate credits than those in the second school.

Absenteeism

A large number of high school students had unusually poor attendance records when they entered high school in the fall, 1989. Of 51,006 students, 6,092, or 12 percent, were absent 21 or more days during the spring term, 1989 (up to May 31). During the previous fall 10 percent were absent 21 or more days. Semesters are 89 to 95 days in length. These students were absent more than 20 percent of the semester. Clearly, a continuation of these absence records results in insufficient credit accumulation in high school.

Superintendents (67 percent), principals (71 percent) and counselors (73 percent) were in clear agreement that absenteeism, whether in the form of truancy or for any other reason, was a major barrier to students accumulating credit. Two-thirds of the superintendents and 72 percent of the principals believed that the achievement and attendance of students entering high schools greatly influenced credit accumulation.

According to their comments, high school superintendents, principals and counselors generally believe that the major reason students are not accumulating sufficient credits is the academic and absenteeism record they bring with them to high school. Some typical comments follow:

> Many students are unprepared to do high school work; that is, they enter high school with major deficiencies in reading and mathematics. They simply fail multiple courses.
>
> If a large number of students had academic and attendance problems in the past, why should one assume that the magic of high school will change the situation. What goes on in the districts (and foreign countries) has a tremendous input on how our students will do in high school.
>
> There has been a continuing increase in the number of students entering high school in need of remediation.
>
> Many students enter from middle schools with poor study habits and attendance patterns.

F. Student and Family Factors

Respondents to the questionnaires and interviewees reported that a number of student behaviors other than academic performance and absenteeism significantly reduce the ability of students to accumulate sufficient credit to graduate within four years.

A preponderance of principals (more than 60 percent) and counselors (more than 65 percent) believed that personal and family problems are a major barrier to credit accumulation. Less than 30 percent thought that pregnancy and drug/alcohol abuse were major barriers.

Many immigrant/refugee students entering the high schools, lacking proficiency in English and at times having minimum schooling, encounter difficulty earning course credit and are likely to stay longer in high school. The number of immigrant/refugee students in the high schools in 1989 with fewer than three years in the school system was approximately 23,000.[13] Twenty-eight percent of the principals and 20 percent of the counselors felt that little or no knowledge of English was a major barrier.

Responses to open-ended questions and to interviews as to reasons for inadequate credit accumulation were more graphic:

> Immigrant children entering the school system in the intermediate or junior high school enter the high school unprepared for its programs.
>
> Many students cannot function under a system of deferred gratification.
>
> The emotional, social impact of poverty is undeniable.
>
> Many students have assumed adult responsibilities at an early age; many have to work more than 20 hours a week.
>
> Many students work long hours with little time to devote to school. High schools do not keep records of which students work and for how many hours per week.
>
> Lack of familiarity with proper decorum, e.g., pledging allegiance to the flag, promptness, civility, not using radios in school.
>
> Apathy/indifference/willingness to settle for the minimum.
>
> Students don't show up for examinations.

Having to care for brothers and sisters.

Student mobility is high.

Many of our students don't get the necessary support from the home causing them to depend upon their own resourcefulness.

Education is not a priority in some households. Students are allowed to be absent for various activities.

These conditions can lead to poorer student performance and less credit accumulation in high school.

G. Structural Factors

There is little question that current structural, organizational arrangements and procedures in the City's high schools have adverse effect on credit accumulation. **Perhaps the most significant finding was that there was no citywide policy concerning credit accumulation and promotion, electives and courses a student may take.**

Respondents to the questionnaires and interviewees were divided as to the extent of the influence of structure. While half of the superintendents thought that the scheduling of remedial courses and the programming of electives were major barriers to credit accumulation, they did not believe the other school controlled functions, such as course cycles and sequencing of courses were major barriers. Less than 20 percent of the principals thought that organizational factors were major barriers. The counselors generally agreed. However, the following three respondent quotes illustrate possible problems:

> Some schools using an annualized course system allow a student who fails the first course in some subject series to get credit for it if he or she passes the second course in the series; others use a semester system which does not allow this adjustment.
>
> Some courses are credited on a yearly basis. If a student passes the first half and fails the second half, he/she must repeat the year.
>
> Sequences in some areas, such as mathematics and science, prevent accumulation if there is failure along the way.

Specific New York City high school graduation requirements, i.e., second language and physical education, were viewed by 40 percent of the principals as adversely affecting credit accumulation. Superintendents agreed somewhat on the gym requirement, but felt that the second language requirement for the local diploma had no effect on credit accumulation.

Responses to open-ended questions indicated that other structural elements in the high schools did, in fact, inhibit credit accumulation. Some of these comments follow:

> Some schools program entering high school students in a regular program with little regard to how well students have done in intermediate or junior high school; students fail when place in inappropriate programs. School structure can pose major problems to "over-the-counter" students, those entering from other schools, school systems or other nations often after the first

week of the semester. The school may not be able to obtain records; there may not be any records (some children have never attended school).

"Introduction to Occupations" courses are given as stand alone courses. "Singleton" (e.g., Regents Physics, math 5,6) and block "shop" sequences limit programming flexibility.

Some students are limited by vocational programming requisites.

Maximum is four academic periods per day only!

H. Other School Factors

There are a number of other factors related to credit accumulation. A fundamental issue involves informing students about credit accumulated and how much more they require for graduation. Most respondents to the questionnaires indicated that the schools most often use face-to-face discussions to inform students of credit accumulation. However, in response to open-ended questions requesting an elaboration of their answers, both principals and counselors indicated that transcripts prepared by the City University's University Application Processing Center (UAPC) were the common means by which schools informed students of course grades and credits. There are no regular mechanisms to tell students how many credits they need to graduate or where they are compared to other students in the school or to a citywide norm. However, a report card is now being developed which will inform a student of credits earned and what credit remains to be earned for graduation.

Articulation between high schools and intermediate and junior high schools is of crucial importance in preparing high schools to meet the educational needs of entering students and in helping students to function successfully in high school. Various comments and responses to open-ended questions on questionnaires indicated that inadequate articulation was a major problem for many schools. Articulation activities ranged from high school counselors interviewing every entering student at the feeder school to an invitation to the feeder schools' counselors to attend an orientation session at the high school. Two comments make the concern clear:

> The inadequate, sometimes non-existent, articulation between intermediate feeder schools and high schools demands immediate attention. Individual high schools and the Division itself are increasingly addressing this issue.
>
> Lack of curriculum alignment between intermediate and high schools may be a reason for the large number of course failures in the ninth grade.

Inadequate orientation programs have also been a problem. The High School Division is requiring that each high school conduct a week long orientation program for students and parents in the fall of 1990. Until now, decisions about orientation programs, according to interviews, were left up to the administration of each high school.

The increased focus on articulation between high schools and feeder schools and on orientation programs is part of the effort to make the ninth grade a successful experience for students. The House programs were organizational changes established a few years ago to accomplish the same purpose. Interestingly, Houses, basically a version of mini-schools, were mentioned a number of times by principals as approaches to assist entering students to achieve at higher levels. Programs in special areas of study and interest such as communications, ecology and law, were hardly mentioned at all. It is conceivable that these approaches (e.g., educational option programs) could be an excellent motivating vehicle for many disaffected students.

Some areas which influence credit accumulation were not mentioned by those responding to the questionnaires and by interviewees. Instruction was noted only once. Supervision was not mentioned at all. Increased guidance services were requested by most superintendents and principals, but some expressed more interest in quality of services than in smaller counselor-student ratios. Still, 74 percent of the principals believed that 80 percent or more of the students in their schools receive some guidance services. Some typical comments follow:

> Counseling time is inadequate due to budgeting constraints. Counselor-student ratio is too high. Quality of time per student is poor because of high ratio.
>
> One homeless student can take up to six hours, a battered wife/girlfriend 12 hours and attempted suicide even longer.
>
> It is not only the percentage who are counselled, it is the quality of the counselling that determines the effectiveness of the service given to the students. Also student programming takes up an inordinate percentage of omnibus guidance counselor time.

I. Strategies to Improve Credit Accumulation

The major organizational effort to assist students to accumulate sufficient credits to progress satisfactorily through high school and graduate within four years is the ConCurrent Options Program. It consists of ten components (see Appendices J and M):

1. Independent Study
2. Community Based Training
3. P.M. School
4. N.Y.C. Vocational Training Center
5. Adult Education Classes
6. Evening and Summer Schools
7. Work Experience Credit
8. Shared Instruction
9. School of Cooperative Technical Education
10. Community College Classes

According to responding principals and counselors, evening and summer schools is the component most used, followed by work experience credit, independent study and P.M. school. No complete count is available of the number of students who participate in all of these components and how many credits they earned. It is known, however, that more than 50,000 students do attend and earn credit. It is expected that within a few years, the Office of Educational Data Services will be able to track how each student earned his or her credits, including those earned through ConCurrent Options. These Options have also not been rigorously evaluated to determine which are the most effective and efficient in helping students to accumulate credit. A recent report on the Program raises some significant issues and recommends courses of action. (See Appendix M.)

In addition to citywide initiatives, such as the planned orientation program for students and parents prior to the fall term, 1990, individual high schools have developed school-based and collaborative programs with non-school organizations and agencies to address the credit accumulation problem. Listed below are some examples:

Individual Research in Science and Mathematics program with the College of Staten Island.

The Vestibule Program which is a combination of independent study and laboratory/tutoring designed for pupils who fall behind due to absence.

Students in one House attend high school four days a week and City College on Friday.

Macy program in health careers.

Community service for 40-60 students; each earns a credit or more.

Operation Success operated in conjunction with Federation Employment and Guidance Services (FEGS).

An Educational Acceleration Program through flexible/modular scheduling allows students to attend three six-week courses per "cycle" with the term divided into three different cycles.

VIII. Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusions

The primary purpose of this study was to find out why so many high school students are not accumulating sufficient credits to graduate within four years. Analysis of gathered data results in the following conclusions:

1. No reliable data were available on a citywide basis, by school or by grade on student credit accumulation. In addition, there are no reliable data which show the impact of slow credit accumulation (and course failure) in early high school grades on continuing beyond the fourth year or dropping out. The only data available dealt with related issues including the number of students remaining in high school for more than four years and course failure information.

2. Questionnaire respondents and interviewees provided various reasons for slow credit accumulation:

-Course failure as exemplified by the one-third of the students who failed three or more subjects in fall, 1989.

-State mandates involving six Regents Competency Tests, remediation courses and course sequences.

-Inadequate previous education and high absenteeism in high school feeder schools.

-Student absenteeism in high school and family problems which force students to work part-time or full-time.

-Structural and other school factors, such as fractional or no credit for remedial courses. Remediation may be mandated by the State, but schools have developed a variety of approaches to giving credit for these courses. In one school, a student may receive no credit for a remedial course; in another school the same student may receive from 1/4 to one credit.

3. Credit accumulation leading to extended high school enrollment for five, six and seven years is not uniformly seen as deleterious. In fact, many respondents to the questionnaires and interviewees viewed it as a prudent response to student needs.

4. There are no citywide policies concerning credit accumulation as related to promotion, credit for remedial courses, courses a student may take each semester and electives.

This results in students' credit accumulation being a function of the school they attend.

5. High School superintendents and two-thirds of the principals agreed that the State mandate forcing students who fail RCTs to take remediation courses adversely affected credit accumulation. Both groups believed that RCTs in the content areas, such as science, are more likely than those in the skill areas, such as reading, to adversely affect credit accumulation. Superintendents, principals and counselors agreed that absenteeism and family problems were major barriers. Principals and counselors also thought that students' personal problems were a major barrier. Superintendents, however, believed they were only a minor barrier. The majority of principals and counselors (80 percent) thought that organizational and structural factors were not major barriers to credit accumulation. The superintendents, however, felt that some structural aspects of a school's operation, e.g., programming of electives, were major barriers.

6. Students are generally informed of their credit accumulation and additional credit needs via face-to-face sessions with counselors and through transcripts. Parents are informed via report cards. Neither is given a sense of credit accumulation progress as compared with other students at similar levels in the school or citywide.

7. Every school which participated in this study described specific credit bearing programs designed to assist students to overcome the problems of failed RCTs, mandated remedial courses or additional sequence requirements. The ConCurrent Options Program, started three years ago, is clearly the most used of all methods to assist students in earning credits, and it is growing rapidly with tens of thousands of students participating every year. However, less than $30 million of the $920 million allocated to the high schools are devoted to this effort.

8. In addition to ConCurrent Options, high schools have utilized a variety of approaches to address the credit accumulation issue including in-school programs, such as coaching centers, mock RCT exams and flexible, modular scheduling, joint school/college partnerships, cooperative programs with non-profit agencies and internships with local hospitals and government agencies.

9. Significantly, for the most part, programs designed to speed along student credit accumulation are not uniformly inventoried, monitored and evaluated, and this information is thus not publicly disseminated. There is no objective analysis leading to a list of successful programs.

10. A citywide requirement that all high schools establish orientation programs for students and their parents prior to school's opening in September, 1990 is a major attempt by the Division to deal with the concerns of students entering high school and to reduce their high rate of failure during the first year of high school.

Recommendations

The Educational Priorities Panel recommends that the school system take the following action:

1. The High School Division should make every effort to utilize data maintained by the Office of Educational Data Services (the Biofile) and the City University's University Application Processing Center (UAPC) as well as data in schools to:

    a. provide, in a systematic manner, beginning in the ninth grade, all students and their parents, as well as schools, with complete information on how many credits students have accumulated, how many more are required for graduation and where the students stand in comparison to other students at the same level in their school and in the City.

    b. analyze the numerous variables affecting student credit accumulation, such as practices to provide partial course credit, ninth grade Houses, transfers from vocational high schools and City regulations such as foreign language and five-period gym requirements.

    c. analyze failure rates for courses, credit accumulation problems in early high school years and dropout statistics to determine correlations.

2. The Board of Education should direct more dollars and remedial resources to pre-high school and ninth grade programs. The school system spends annually between $150 and $200 million of its $920 million high school budget to educate students enrolled for a fifth, sixth and seventh year. Greater emphasis in three areas is proposed:

    a. Increased focus on articulation with intermediate and junior high schools during the spring semester prior to entering high school, vital to student success in the ninth grade.

    b. A major transition program for entering high school students during the summer. This would provide opportunities to assess needs, begin skills remediation, emphasize high school study and test taking methodologies, involve parents and set the scene for more intensive support work in the ninth grade for those who require it.

c. Counseling and related support from other agencies (e.g., medical screening and treatment, work support for parents and older siblings). This should be "front loaded" during the summer transition and the ninth grade.

3. Programs designed to promote student credit accumulation should be inventoried, monitored, evaluated and these data should be publicly disseminated. This process would lead to an objective analysis (educational and cost/benefit) of successful programs and the phase-out of programs which produce few benefits.

4. The pace of a student's credit accumulation must not be dependent on the practices of the particular school attended. Some high schools, but clearly not all, are utilizing a variety of approaches to address slow credit accumulation which do not necessarily lower promotion or graduation standards. These include: a) injecting subject matter curriculum into remedial course work and thereby permitting credit to be granted for the course, b) providing full credit for a one year sequence in which the first half is failed but the second half is passed, c) designing flexible, modular scheduling, which may be administratively burdensome, but is apparently successful in allowing students to accumulate many credits in short periods of time and d) using P.M. school to meet remediation requirements. These practices raise significant policy issues that should be reviewed citywide. To reiterate, a student's rate of credit accumulation should not be a function of the student's high school selection decision.

5. Based on all elements above, a comprehensive citywide policy on credit accumulation must be established by the Board of Education. The policy should be flexible enough to permit the use of alternatives on a school-by-school basis--backed by sound analysis and closely monitored and evaluated for measurable results.

IX. Endnotes

1. New York City Board of Education, 1989-90 Directory of the Public High Schools (New York, the Board, 1989) pages 28-30 and The State Education Department, Bureau of Elementary and Secondary Testing Program, Regents Examinations, Regents Competency Tests, & Proficiency Examinations (Albany, New York, the Department, June 1989) Appendix VI Section 100.5 of the Commissioner's Regulations, pages 38-42.

2. New York City Board of Education, Office of Research, Evaluation, and Assessment, Accountability Section Report The Cohort Report: Four-Year Results for the Class of 1988 and Follow-ups of the Classes of 1986 and 1987, (New York, the Board, April, 1989) page i.

3. New York City Department of Education, Superintendent's Annual Report (New York, the Department, 1941) pages 276 and 277.

4. Education Week, "Districts," Education Week (Volume IX, Number 28, April 4, 1990) page 3.

5. New York City Board of Education, Office of Research, Evaluation, and Assessment, Accountability Section Report The Cohort Report: Four-Year Results for the Class of 1988 and Follow-ups of the Classes of 1986 and 1987 (New York, the Board, April, 1989) pages 23 and 24.

6. New York City Board of Education, Office of Educational Assessment, The Cohort Report: Four-year Results for the Class of 1987 and an Update on the Class of 1986 (New York, the Board, June, 1988) Appendix B and New York City Board of Education, Office of Research, Evaluation, and Assessment, Accountability Section Report The Cohort Report: Four-Year Results for the Class of 1988 and Follow-ups of the Classes of 1986 and 1987 (New York, the Board, April, 1989) Pages 46-57.

7. The Cohort Report, April, 1989, pages 46-64.

8. The Cohort Report, April, 1989, pages 34-38.

9. New York City Board of Education, Office of Public Affairs, Facts & Figures 1988-89 (New York, the Board, 1989) page 3.

10. New York City Board of Education. Office of Educational Data Services, Preliminary and Draft Scholarship Summary Fall 1989 and Failure Analysis Fall 1989 (New York, the Board, February, 1990) 12 pages.

11. The State Education Department, New York The State of Learning: A Report to the Governor and the Legislature on the

Educational Status of the State's Schools (Albany, New York, the Department, January, 1990) Pages 84-87.

12. New York City Board of Education, Office of Educational Data Services, *Table G-1 Profile of Entering Class and Table G-2, 3 Year Profile of Entering Class* (New York, the Board, September, 1989).

13. Telephone discussion with Marvin Jacobs, Office of Educational Data Services, New York City public schools, April 27, 1990.

APPENDIX A

Educational Priorities Panel Member Agencies

1. Advocates for Children
2. American Jewish Committee, N.Y. Chapter
3. American Reading Council
4. Asian-American Communication Inc.
5. ASPIRA of New York
6. Association for the Help of Retarded Children, Inc.
7. Association of Puerto Rican Executive Directors
8. Black Agency Executives
9. Citizens' Committee for Children of New York, Inc.
10. The City Club of New York
11. Community Service Society
12. The Junior League of Brooklyn
13. The Junior League of New York City, Inc.
14. League of Women Voters of New York City
15. Metropolitan Council of New York NAACP
16. National Black Child Development Institute, Inc.
17. New York Coalition of 100 Black Women
18. New York Urban Coalition
19. New York Urban League
20. Presbytery of New York City
21. PROGRESS, Inc.
22. Public Education Association
23. Resources for Children with Special Needs,Inc.
24. Rheedlen Foundation
25. United Neighborhood Houses
26. United Parents Associations
27. Women's City Club of New York

APPENDIX B

Educational Priorities Panel

STUDY OF CREDIT ACCUMULATION
High School Superintendent's Questionnaire

Dear Colleague:

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. As the cover letter notes, no schools or individuals will be identified in any report, oral or written. We hope you will be candid in your responses.

We would appreciate your completing and returning the questionnaire by Thursday, March 15. If you have any questions concerning this survey, you may call me or Dr. Bernard Esrig at (212) 840-1166.

Sincerely,

Noreen Connell
Executive Director

1. To what extent do you believe that credit accumulation in your borough is a problem? Please check one.

No problem_____ Minor problem____ Major problem_____

Please explain.

2. In what ways have diploma requirements listed below affected credit accumulation by most students in your borough? Please place the appropriate number on each line.

(1) Positively (2) Neutral; no effect (3) Adversely

1. N.Y.C. second language requirement for local diploma 1)___
2. N.Y.C. physical education requirement (5 times a week) 2)___
3. R.C.T. in reading 3)___
4. R.C.T. in math 4)___
5. R.C.T. in writing 5)___
6. R.C.T. in history and government 6)___
7. R.C.T. in science 7)___
8. R.C.T. in global studies 8)___
9. Remedial instruction for those failing R.C.T. 9)___
10. Additional unit sequences required by State 10)__

3. Please describe any other State or City regulations which you believe have affected student credit accumulation.

4. To what extent have the achievement and attendance of students entering the borough high schools influenced credit accumulation in these schools? Please check one.

(1) A great deal___ (2) To some extent___ (3) No effect; neutral___

Please explain.

5. Listed below are possible barriers to credit accumulation. Please indicate if they have been barriers in your borough by placing the appropriate number on each line: (1) major barrier, (2) minor barrier, (3) no barrier.

1. sequencing of courses 1)_____
2. course cycles 2)_____
3. student mobility 3)_____
4. student absenteeism for any reason 4)_____
5. course availability 5)_____
6. staff availability 6)_____
7. credit transfer policies 7)_____
8. overutilization of school 8)_____
9. scheduling of remedial and other non-credit courses 9)_____
10. programming of electives 10)____

(over)

(Continued) (1) major barrier, (2) minor barrier, (3) no barrier

11. process of accrediting courses 11)____
12. illness 12)____
13. truancy 13)____
14. pregnancy 14)
15. drug/alcohol abuse 15)____
16. family problems 16)____
17. personal problems 17)____
18. little or no knowledge of English 18)____
19. little or no previous education 19)____
20. any others? Please describe

6. How are parents informed of their children's credit accumulation? Please indicate only the most frequent practice (place a "1" on the line) and the least frequent practice (place a "2" on the line).

1. by face-to-face discussion 1)____
2. by mail 2)____
3. by telephone 3)____
4. by report card 4)____
5. by other written correspondence 5)____
6. they are not officially informed 6)____
7. other (Please describe.)

7. How are students informed of the credits they have accumulated? Please indicate only the most frequent practice (place a "1" on the line) and the least frequent practice (place a "2" on the line).

1. by face-to-face discussion 1)____
2. by mail 2)____
3. by telephone 3)____
4. by report card 4)____
5. by other written correspondence 5)____
6. they are not officially informed 6)____
7. other (Please describe.)

8. Ideally all students who are falling behind in accumulating credits should receive some counseling assistance. What percentage of these students are able to receive such assistance in the borough schools?

Please check one.
100%____ 80-99%____ 60-79%____ 40-59%____ 20-39%____ 0-19%____

If you believe that the percentage is too low, please indicate why it is so low and what you, as superintendent, can do about improving the situation.

9. Some schools have developed innovative practices to help students to accumulate credits toward a diploma. Please describe one or two that may have been instituted in your borough. Please feel free to attach pertinent materials.

10. Is there any other information you believe we should gather which might pinpoint the reasons and possibly some solutions for inadequate student credit accumulation?

Optional, but we hope you will identify yourself.

Completed by ______________________ Tel. No.______________

Borough______________________________

Please return this questionnaire in the enclosed envelope to: Dr. Bernard Esrig, Perry Davis Associates, 24 West 45th Street, Suite 1409, New York, N.Y. 10036. Thank you.

APPENDIX C

Educational Priorities Panel

STUDY OF CREDIT ACCUMULATION
Principal's Questionnaire

Dear Colleague:

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. As the cover letter notes, no schools or individuals will be identified in any report, oral or written. We hope you will be candid in your responses.

We would appreciate your completing and returning the questionnaire by Monday, March 19. If you have questions concerning this survey, you may call me or Dr. Bernard Esrig at (212) 840-1166.

Sincerely,

Noreen Connell
Executive Director

1. To what extent do you believe that credit accumulation in your school is a problem? Please check one.

no problem______ minor problem______serious problem______
Please explain.

2. In what ways have diploma requirements listed below affected credit accumulation **by most students in your school? Please place the appropriate number on each line.**
(1) positively (2) neutral; no effect (3) adversely

1. N.Y.C. second language requirement for local diploma 1)___
2. N.Y.C. physical education requirement (5 times a week) 2)___
3. R.C.T. in reading 3)___
4. R.C.T. in math 4)___
5. R.C.T. in writing 5)___
6. R.C.T. in history and government 6)___
7. R.C.T. in science 7)___
8. R.C.T. in global studies 8)___
9. Remedial instruction for those failing R.C.T. 9)___
10. Additional unit sequences required by State 10)___

3. Please describe any other State or City regulations which you believe have affected student credit accumulation.

4. To what extent have the achievement and attendance of students entering your school **influenced their credit accumulation?**

(1) A great deal___ (2) To some extent___ (3) No effect; neutral___
Please explain.

5. Listed below are possible barriers to credit accumulation. Please indicate if they have been barriers in your school by placing the appropriate number on each line: (1) major barrier, (2) minor barrier, (3) no barrier.

1. sequencing of courses 1)_____
2. course cycles 2)_____
3. student mobility 3)_____
4. student absenteeism for any reason 4)_____
5. course availability 5)_____
6. staff availability 6)_____
7. credit transfer policies 7)_____
8. overutilization of school 8)_____
9. scheduling of remedial and other non-credit courses 9)_____
10. programming of electives 10)_____
11. process of accrediting courses 11)_____
12. illness 12)_____
13. truancy 13)_____
14. pregnancy 14)_____
15. drug/alcohol abuse 15)_____
16. family problems (over) 16)_____

(Continued) (1) major barrier, (2) minor barrier, (3) no barrier

17. personal problems
18. little or no knowledge of English
19. little or no previous education
20. any others? (Please describe.)

17)____
18)____
19)____

6. How are parents informed of their children's credit accumulation? Please indicate only the most frequent practice (place a "1" on the line and the least frequent practice (place a "2" on the line).

1. by face-to-face discussion
2. by mail
3. by telephone
4. by report card
5. by other correspondence
6. they are not officially informed
7. other (Please describe.)

1)____
2)____
3)____
4)____
5)____
6)____

7. How are students informed of the credits they have accumulated? Please indicate only the most frequent practice (place a "1" on the line) and the least frequent practice (place a "2" on the line).

1. by face-to-face discussion
2. by mail
3. by telephone
4. by report card
5. by written correspondence
6. they are not officially informed
7. other (Please describe.)

1)____
2)____
3)____
4)____
5)____
6)____

8. Ideally all students who are falling behind in accumulating credits should receive some counseling assistance. What percentage of these students are able to receive this help?

Please check one.
100%____ 80-99%____ 60-79%____ 40-59%____ 20-39%____ 0-19%____

If you believe that the percentage is too low, please indicate why it is so low and what you, as principal, can do about improving the situation.

9. Listed below are ConCurrent Options available in some high schools. Please indicate whether an option is available and to what extent students in your school are taking advantage of each option: (1) high use (2) some use (3) little or no use.

	Available?		Use?
	Yes	No	1, 2 or 3
1. Independent Study	___	___	___
2. Community Based Training	___	___	___
3. P.M. School	___	___	___
4. NYC Vocational Training Center	___	___	___
5. Adult Education Classes	___	___	___
6. Evening and Summer Schools	___	___	___
7. Work Experience Credit	___	___	___
8. Shared Instruction	___	___	___
9. School of Cooperative Tech. Ed.	___	___	___
10. Community College Classes	___	___	___

10. Some schools have developed other innovative practices to help students accumulate credits toward a diploma. Please describe one or two that may have been instituted in your school. Please feel free to attach any relevant materials.

11. Is there any other information you believe we should gather which might pinpoint the reasons for and suggest possible solutions to inadequate student credit accumulation?

Optional, but we hope you will identify yourself.
Completed by ______________________ Tel. No.______________

School____

Please return this questionnaire in the enclosed envelope to: Dr. Bernard Esrig, Perry Davis Associates, 25 West 45th Street, Suite 1409, New York, N.Y. 10036. Thank you.

APPENDIX D

Educational Priorities Panel

STUDY OF CREDIT ACCUMULATION
Counselor's Questionnaire

Dear Colleague:

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. As the cover letter notes, no schools or individuals will be identified in any report, oral or written. We would appreciate your identifying yourself even though it is optional. In any event, we hope that you will be candid in your responses.

We would appreciate that you complete and return the questionnaire by Monday, March 19, 1990. If you have any questions concerning this survey, you may call me or Dr. Bernard Esrig at (212) 840-1166.

Sincerely,

Noreen Connell
Executive Director

1. Listed below are possible barriers to credit accumulation. Please indicate if they have been barriers in your school by placing the appropriate number on each line: (1) major barrier, (2) minor barrier, (3) no barrier.

1. sequencing of courses 1)____
2. course cycles 2)____
3. student mobility 3)____
4. student absenteeism for any reason 4)____
5. course availability 5)____
6. staff availability 6)____
7. credit transfer policies 7)____
8. overutilization of school 8)____
9. scheduling of remedial and other non-credit courses 9)____
10. programming of electives 10)____
11. process of accrediting courses 11)____
12. illness 12)____
13. truancy 13)____
14. pregnancy 14)____
15. drug/alcohol abuse 15)____
16. family problems 16)____
17. personal problems 17)____
18. little or no knowledge of English 18)____
19. little or no previous education 19)____
20. any others? (Please describe.)

2. How are parents informed of their children's credit accumulation? Please indicate only the most frequent practice (place a "1" on the line) and the least frequent practice (place a "2" on the line).

1. by face-to-face discussion 1)____
2. by mail 2)____
3. by telephone 3)____
4. by report card 4)____
5. by other correspondence 5)____
6. they are not officially informed 6)____
7. other (Please describe.)

3. How are students informed of the credits they have accumulated? Please indicate only the most frequent practice (place a "1" on the line) and the least frequent practice (place a "2" on the line).

1. by face-to-face discussion 1)____
2. by mail 2)____
3. by telephone 3)____
4. by report card 4)____
5. by written correspondence 5)____
6. they are not officially informed 6)____
7. other (Please describe.)

(over)

4. Are there any scheduling or programming mandates in your school which affect student credit accumulation? If there are, please describe them.

5. Please describe the review procedure used for student schedules.

6. Please indicate in what ways formal or informal school policies concerning the areas listed below affect scheduling decisions and student credit accumulation.

1. number of courses a student may attend

2. number of academic courses a student may attend

3. number of non-credit bearing courses a student may attend

4. number of electives a student may attend

7. Listed below are ConCurrent Options available in some high schools. Please indicate whether an option is available and to what extent students in your school are taking advantage of each option: (1) high use (2) some use (3) little or no use.

		Available?		Use?
		Yes	No	1, 2 or 3
1.	Independent Study	___	___	___
2.	Community Based Training	___	___	___
3.	P.M. School	___	___	___
4.	NYC Vocational Training Center	___	___	___
5.	Adult Education Classes	___	___	___
6.	Evening and Summer Schools	___	___	___
7.	Work Experience Credit	___	___	___
8.	Shared Instruction	___	___	___
9.	School of Cooperative Tech. Ed.	___	___	___
10.	Community College Classes	___	___	___

7. Some schools have developed other innovative practices to help students accumulate credits toward a diploma. Please describe one or two that may have been instituted in your school. Please feel free to attach any relevant materials.

8. Is there any other information you believe we should gather which might pinpoint the reasons for and suggest possible solutions to inadequate student credit accumulation?

Optional, but we hope you will identify yourself.

Completed by ______________________ Tel. No.______________

School____

Please return this questionnaire in the enclosed envelope to: Dr. Bernard Esrig, Perry Davis Associates, 25 West 45th Street, Suite 1409, New York, N.Y. 10036. Thank you.

APPENDIX E

The View from Headquarters

For further insights into the issue of student credit accumulation, PDA interviewed 16 present and former high school managers including the present Executive Director and two former Executive Directors of the Division. The questions and the most frequent responses are presented below. The responses demonstrate the wide range of views held by headquarters officials.

1. Do you believe that the fact that many high school students are not accumulating a sufficient number of credits to graduate within four years is a problem?

Some school principals believed it was a serious problem; others viewed it as an opportunity to provide a more individualized education to students whose needs cannot be met in four years.

> There is tremendous inefficiency in terms of costs, time and productivity having students attend school for more than four years.
>
> It is an issue with programmatic, budgetary and community perception implications; it involves changes in the perception of success in high school.
>
> Dropout prevention programs stress staying in school; consequently, viewing a fifth year in high school to complete requirements as a negative condition undermines these programs.
>
> The aim should be on obtaining a diploma or achieving certain tasks, not on time, particularly "seat time."
>
> Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) for special education students often require more than four years.
>
> A problem, but considering the deficits many students bring with them to high school, it is only naturally that some students will remain more than four years.

2. What are the main reasons that high school students do not earn sufficient course credits to graduate from high school in four years?

The reasons suggested by headquarters officials can be divided into State, school, student and family and societal factors:

State Education Department, Board of Regents

The State's increase in the number of mandated RCTs to six, reading, mathematics, writing, science, American history and global studies, by themselves, and the need to be enrolled in appropriate non- or 1/2 credit remedial courses if one fails an RCT undoubtedly hinders credit accumulation.

Basically, Section 100.5 of the State Commissioner's Regulations (setting forth graduation requirements) has made it increasingly more difficult to complete high school in four years unless one passes every course and test.

State regulations prohibiting full credit for remedial courses taken as a result of low DRP or MAT math scores in the intermediate school or failure of an RCT force some students to take up to three periods a day in non- or 1/2 credit bearing courses, clearly an obstacle to graduation in four years.

State regulations and Board of Education policies do not significantly affect credit accumulation; students have different life styles and the structure of schools has changed little to meet these styles. These factors are more important than knowledge factors.

School

There is no City-wide Board of Education policy concerning credit accumulation and promotion to the next grade.

Some schools program entering high school students in a regular program with little regard to how well students have done in intermediate or junior high school; students fail when placed in inappropriate programs.

The Board of Education's requirement of a foreign language for the local diploma, a requirement not mandated by the State, makes credit accumulation more difficult.

Some teachers are not teaching effectively or are using rigid developmental lessons formats.

Schools are not doing enough to address the high failure rates in the ninth grade which results in student discouragement and lack of credits.

Ninth grade Houses, introduced a few years into all high schools, and designed to address the many problems entering students face, have not been implemented as conceived.

School staff, including supervisors, teachers, other staff and their respective unions increase in number as more jobs are created to deal with the thousands of students who enroll for a fifth, sixth or seventh year.

Family and Societal

Student mobility is high, 11 to 13 percent a year.

The emotional, social impact of poverty is undeniable.

Many students have assumed adult responsibilities at an early age; many have to work more than 20 hours a week.

Student

Many students are unprepared to do high school work; that is, they enter high school with major deficiencies in reading and mathematics. They simply fail multiple courses.

Many students have poor attendance and fail courses, not because of absenteeism, per se, but because of failure to meet class, homework or test requirements.

Immigrant children entering the school system in the intermediate or junior high school enter the high school unprepared for its programs.

Some students are uninterested in the courses of study when they are assigned to schools not of their choosing or when they discover they are not really attracted to a vocational school program for which they applied.

Many students enter high school with inadequate English language skills.

Some students entering the 10th grade from a junior high school have accumulated only five or six credits in the ninth grade putting them behind the first day in the high school.

High school students increasingly see staying in high school as important; they may in the past have dropped out.

Many students cannot function under a system of deferred gratification (passing a course at end of term often with no feedback during the term).

3. What are the structural barriers that adversely affect credit accumulation, such as course cycles or course availability?

Schools vary in the amount of credit they grant for completing courses, e.g., 1/4 credit for gym or no credit.

Some schools grant partial credit for courses; that is, by completing some requirements for a course the student obtains fractional credit. There is no City-wide policy concerning partial credit.

Modular programming and scheduling increase the opportunities for credit accumulation, but it is administratively difficult to design and implement. Yet, it should be possible for UAPC to provide the assistance.

They are not significant; most good guidance departments can tailor, customize programs to students' needs.

Sequences in some areas, such as mathematics and science, prevent accumulation if there is failure along the way.

Funding of high schools, which assumes seven periods of instruction, reduces flexibility and variability.

School structure can pose major problems to "over-the-counter" students, those entering from other schools, school systems or other nations often after the first week of the semester. The school may not be able to obtain records; there may not be any records (some children have never attended school). High schools vary in their response to these situations for they are handled on an individual basis. However, if a large number enter a school within a short time span, the school may not be able to provide the necessary individualized attention, and the students may lose credit for work accomplished before the start of the new semester.

Some schools using an annualized course system allow a student who fails the first course in some subject series to get credit for it if he or she passes the second course in the series; others use a semester system which does not allow this adjustment.

4. Are there any reasons for the lack of credit accumulation that should receive more attention than others?

The major issue is student preparation for high school--the profiles of entering classes clearly indicate the problem.

Attention must be paid where students fail in three or more subjects and to schools with many such students.

The inadequate, sometimes non-existent, articulation between intermediate feeder schools and high schools demands immediate attention. Individual high schools and the Division itself are increasingly addressing this issue.

Lack of curriculum alignment between intermediate and high schools may be a reason for the large number of course failures in the ninth grade.

Many students work long hours with little time to devote to school. High schools do not keep records of which students work and for how many hours per week. Working more than 20 hours a week would seem to have a deleterious effect on course work and credit accumulation.

LEP students entering the intermediate school from another country generally must take high school examinations in English; they make slow progress.

The school system should reconsider the pressure to complete high school in four years. The focus is now on deficits. The focus should be on tasks to be accomplished in high school, not on why or whether the student is in school. The aim should be continuous progress toward a diploma.

Attention has to be paid to provide an integrated, comprehensive approach to students with great needs.

5. What are the strategies, if any, that you are aware of that have been particularly effective in reducing the number and percentage of students who fail to accumulate credits at a "normal" rate?

The ConCurrent Options program was most often mentioned. It has many components to meet the different needs of students (see Appendix H for additional information). They include the following:

1. Independent Study
2. Community Based Training

3. P.M. School
4. NYC Vocational Training Center
5. Adult Education Classes
6. Evening and Summer Schools
7. Work Experience Credit
8. Shared Instruction
9. School of Cooperative Technical Education
10. Community College Classes

In 30 high schools, funds are made available specifically for a ConCurrent Options counselor whose primary function is to advise students on how to utilize the various options to obtain additional credit. In a recent report on the ConCurrent Options Program, significant issues are raised and recommendations made (see Appendix M)

Holistic, systematic school approaches, instead of focus on individuals, are being tried to address the twin problems of dropouts and inadequate credit accumulation.

A new program to be introduced in all high schools this fall will orient students and their parents to school during a week's program prior to the opening of school in September.

The High School Division initiated an articulation program (Project Welcome) during spring, 1990 for at-risk, Chapter I eligible middle school students scheduled to enter high schools in fall, 1990.

High school should be viewed as a travel agent helping a student to go where and when he or she wants to go. The aim is to help students to reach their destination (a diploma) on time (four years).

High School clusters, where honestly developed with appropriate curriculum and staff development, work to encourage students to earn credits in an area in which they are interested.

Effective bilingual programs increase retention and presumably credit accumulation.

6. Is there any other information which you believe we should obtain to get an accurate assessment of the problem of insufficient credit accumulation?

Interviewees indicated areas where additional study is needed.

Data on the effect of student participation in the work force on his or her academic work are needed.

What happens to those who do graduate especially those who stay longer than four years?

How does the City's physical education requirement of five periods a week for seven terms (the State's is three periods) affect credit accumulation?

What are the effects on students of transferring out of vocational programs or schools to zoned schools after the ninth grade (a common occurrence)?

How can high schools tie in their programs with community colleges which grant high school diplomas and matriculation if a student successfully completes 24 credits at the college?

What are the effects, if any, of the new State high school registration procedures and the new accountability program (Excellence and Accountability or EAP) on credit accumulation?

To what extent would a report card which includes information as to what a student needs to graduate in addition to what he or she has accomplished (this card is in development) motivate students to greater efforts to accumulate credits?

7. Other Comments

The prohibition on using the social security number to track students makes it difficult to do matches against personnel at the City University of New York (CUNY), the Armed Forces and other organizations. There is a need for a universal identifier for the City's students so that school, health, social welfare, police and other City agency records can be matched.

Some respondents thought that the relative ease with which a student can obtain a GED is a disincentive to accumulating credits in the regular high school program. The increase in the number of GEDs granted over the past few years and the problem of student credit accumulation seem to support this observation.

The high schools should consider the Copernican model of high school organization. (This model emphasizes macrosheduling, individualized instruction, differentiated diplomas, mastery-based credits instead of letter grades, mastery of course objectives, efficiency of learning, individual learning plans and a dejuvenilizing of the high school.)[1]

Endnote

1. Joseph M. Carroll, "The Copernican Plan: Restructuring the American High School," Phi Delta Kappan, January, 1990, Volume 71, Number 5, pages 358-365.

APPENDIX F

Educational Priorities Panel

STUDY OF CREDIT ACCUMULATION

High School Superintendent's Questionnaire

1. To what extent do you believe that credit accumulation in your borough is a problem? Please **check one.**

No problem 0 Minor problem 3 Major problem 3

2. In what ways have diploma requirements listed below affected credit accumulation by **most students in your borough? Please place** the appropriate number on each line

(1) Positively (2) Neutral, no effect (3) Adversely

			(1)	(2)	(3)
1.	**N.Y.C. second language** requirement for local diploma	1)	0	6	0
2.	**N.Y.C. physical** education requirement (5 times a week)	2)	0	4	2
3.	**R.C.T. in reading**	3)	2	3	1
4.	**R.C.T. in math**	4)	2	3	1
5.	**R.C.T. in writing**	5)	3	2	1
6.	**R.C.T. in history** and government	6)	0	1	5
7.	**R.C.T. in science**	7)	0	1	5
8.	**R.C.T. in global** studies	8)	0	1	5
9.	**Remedial instruction** for those failing R.C.T.	9)	0	0	6
10.	**Additional unit sequences** required by State	10)	0	2	4

4. To what extent have the achievement and attendance of students entering the borough high schools **influenced credit accumulation** in these schools? Please check one.

(1) A great deal 4 (2) To some extent 1 (3) No effect, neutral 1

5. Listed below are possible barriers to credit accumulation. Please indicate if they have been **barriers in your borough** by placing the appropriate number on each line. (1) major barrier, (2) minor barrier, **(3) no barrier.**

			(1)	(2)	(3)
1.	**sequencing** of courses	1)	0	3	3
2.	**course cycles**	2)	0	4	2
3.	**student mobility**	3)	4	2	0
4.	**student absenteeism** for any reason	4)	5	1	0
5.	**course availability**	5)	0	4	2
6.	**staff availability**	6)	1	5	0
7.	**credit transfer** policies	7)	0	1	5
8.	**overutilization** of school	8)	2	1	3
9.	**scheduling** of remedial and other non-credit courses	9)	4	1	1
0.	**programming** of electives	10)	3	0	3
11.	**process** of accrediting courses	11)	0	3	3
12.	**illness**	12)	1	4	1
13.	**truancy**	13)	4	2	0
14.	**pregnancy**	14)	2	4	0
15.	**drug/alcohol** abuse	15)	2	4	0
16.	**family problems**	16)	4	2	0
17.	**personal problems**	17)	1	5	0
18.	**little or no knowledge** of English	18)	3	3	0
19.	**little or no previous** education	19)	4	2	0
20.	**any others?** Please describe				

6. How are parents informed of their children's credit accumulation? Please indicate **only the most frequent practice (place a "1"** on the line) and the least frequent practice **(place a "2" on the line).**

			(1)	(2)
1.	**by face-to-face** discussion	1)	1	1
2.	**by mail**	2)	0	0
3.	**by telephone**	3)	0	3
4.	**by report card**	4)	4	0
5.	**by other written** correspondence	5)	0	0
6.	**they are not officially** informed	6)	0	0
7.	**other (Please** describe.)			

7. How are students informed of the credits they have accumulated? Please indicate **only the most frequent practice (place a "1"** on the line) and the least frequent practice (place a "2" **on the line).**

			(1)	(2)
1.	**by face-to-face** discussion	1)	4	0
2.	**by mail**	2)	0	0
3.	**by telephone**	3)	0	3
4.	**by report card**	4)	1	0
5.	**by other written** correspondence	5)	0	0
6.	**they are not officially** informed	6)	0	1
7.	**other (Please** describe.)			

8. Ideally all students who are falling behind in accumulating credits should receive **some counseling assistance. What percentage of these** students are able to receive such assistance **in the borough schools?**

Please check one.

100% 0 **80-99%** 4 **60-79%** 0 40-59% 0 20-39% 2 0-19% 0

APPENDIX F

Questionnaire Responses: High School Superintendents

All the superintendents agreed that credit accumulation in their boroughs was a problem. They noted the importance of credit accumulation in the 9th and 10th grades as motivation to complete high school. One superintendent pointed out that many students in her borough are taking two or three non- or 1/2 credit remedial courses.

The superintendents responded to a question on the effect of State mandates in the following ways. They did not believe that New York City's second language requirement for the local diploma affected credit accumulation. They split three ways on whether the RCTs in reading, mathematics and writing had a positive, neutral or adverse effect on credit accumulation. On the other hand, they generally agreed that the RCTs in history and government, science and global studies adversely affect credit accumulation. And they unanimously believed that mandated remedial instruction adversely affects earning credit.

In response to the question on the effect of other State or City regulations, superintendents noted that (1) the pre-high school acceleration courses and tests have often resulted in placement in courses which are too difficult for the students, (2) the "Introduction to Occupations" course and test are unnecessary, (3) increased sequence requirements such as the increase of social studies to four units are burdensome and (4) the school system's attendance procedures, which now focus on "seat time" (simply attending class) rather than on achievement, have had a negative impact.

Question four asked whether the achievement and attendance of students entering high schools influenced credit accumulation. Four of six believed they had a great deal of influence. They pointed out that (1) some students, particularly those coming from other countries, have had limited educational experience, (2) students enter schools, sometimes with 50+ per year absence records; they are already school phobic, (3) schools are often too rigid to adjust curriculum to students' needs and abilities and (4) a past pattern of poor attendance and/or achievement must be overcome before students can be expected to develop the habits of daily attendance and study that lead to credit accumulation and graduation.

Question five listed 19 possible barriers (see Appendix B, question five) to credit accumulation. A majority of superintendents felt that student behaviors such as absenteeism and truancy, family problems, student mobility, little or no previous education and certain school controlled factors, such as scheduling of remedial courses were major barriers. The superintendents considered course cycles and availability, and staff availability, student illness, pregnancy, alcohol abuse and personal problems minor barriers to credit accumulation.

Questions six and seven which asked how schools inform students and parents of credit accumulation. The superintendents who indicated one most frequent and one least frequent practice noted that parents seem to be informed primarily by report card and students through face-to-face discussions. The telephone seems to be a "least frequent" use vehicle for communicating information about credit accumulation.

In describing the percentage of students with credit accumulation problems who receive some counseling, the superintendents split, with four indicating 80 to 99 percent receive such assistance and two saying only 20 to 39 percent receive the help.

Asked what they would do to improve the situation, all believed that funding should be increased for counseling and that counselor case loads should be reduced. They thought that a ratio of one counselor to 200 students was desirable. Parenthetically, some responding high school principals noted that they already have that ratio, but preferred a one to 150 ratio. One superintendent suggested that the schools should view the counseling concept more broadly and include the many outside agencies as part of a counseling network.

In response to a question on innovative practices, most superintendents mentioned the ConCurrent Options Program, especially the P.M. school, independent study and shared instruction. One superintendent stressed the need for non-graded course offerings and "make up" credit procedures.

The superintendents, when asked what additional information on credit accumulation would be worth obtaining, focused on the previous educational experiences of entering high school students and the "poverty" status of so many students requiring them to work, impeding school attendance.

Educational Priorities Panel

STUDY OF CREDIT ACCUMULATION
Principal's Questionnaire

1. To what extent do you believe that credit accumulation in your school is a problem? Please check one.

no problem 20 minor problem 25 serious problem 37

2. In what ways have diploma requirements listed below affected credit accumulation by most students in your school? Please place the appropriate number on each line
(1) positively (2) neutral; no effect (3) adversely

		(1)	(2)	(3)
1.	N.Y.C. second language requirement for local diploma	1) 5	41	30
2.	N.Y.C. physical education requirement (5 times a week)	2) 5	40	30
3.	R.C.T. in reading	3) 7	52	15
4.	R.C.T. in math	4) 7	40	26
5.	R.C.T. in writing	5) 7	46	21
6.	R.C.T. in history and government	6) 4	33	34
7.	R.C.T. in science	7) 4	30	37
8.	R.C.T. in global studies	8) 4	29	37
9.	Remedial instruction for those failing R.C.T	9) 4	20	49
10.	Additional unit sequences required by State	10) 5	24	49

4. To what extent have the achievement and attendance of students entering your school influenced their credit accumulation?
(1) A great deal 55 (2) To some extent 14 (3) No effect, neutral 7

5. Listed below are possible barriers to credit accumulation. Please indicate if they have been barriers in your school by placing the appropriate number on each line: (1) major barrier, (2) minor barrier, (3) no barrier.

		(1)	(2)	(3)
1.	sequencing of courses	1) 13	27	39
2.	course cycles	2) 5	18	51
3.	student mobility	3) 36	25	19
4.	student absenteeism for any reason	4) 57	14	9
5.	course availability	5) 5	33	39
6.	staff availability	6) 9	23	45
7.	credit transfer policies	7) 8	15	54
8.	overutilization of school	8) 14	23	41
9.	scheduling of remedial and other non-credit courses	9) 41	21	17
10.	programming of electives	10) 10	27	39
11.	process of accrediting courses	11) 5	11	61
12.	illness	12) 24	35	19
13.	truancy	13) 51	17	11
14.	pregnancy	14) 23	38	17
15.	drug/alcohol abuse	15) 15	40	22
16.	family problems	16) 51	24	5
17.	personal problems	17) 52	23	3
18.	little or no knowledge of English	18) 23	40	17
19.	little or no previous education	19) 30	31	19
20.	any others? (Please describe.)			

6. How are parents informed of their children's credit accumulation? Please indicate only the most frequent practice (place a "1" on the line and the least frequent practice (place a "2" on the line).

		(1)	(2)
1.	by face-to-face discussion	1) 2	6
2.	by mail	2) 3	2
3.	by telephone	3) 9	9
4.	by report card	4) 26	1
5.	by other correspondence	5) 3	4
6.	they are not officially informed	6) 0	17
7.	other (Please describe.)		

7. How are students informed of the credits they have accumulated? Please indicate only the most frequent practice (place a "1" on the line) and the least frequent practice (place a "2" on the line).

		(1)	(2)
1.	by face-to-face discussion	1) 22	2
2.	by mail	2) 1	1
3.	by telephone	3) 0	9
4.	by report card	4) 7	3

5. by written correspondence 5)___1 7
6. they are not officially informed 6)___0 17
7. other (Please describe.)

8. Ideally all students who are falling behind in accumulating credits should receive some counseling assistance. What percentage of these students are able to receive this help?
Please check one.
100%_36_ 80-99%_24_ 60-79%_9_ 40-59%_8_ 20-39%_4_ 0-19%_0_

9. Listed below are ConCurrent Options available in some high schools. Please indicate whether an option is available and to what extent students in your school are taking advantage of each option: (1) high use (2) some use (3) little or no use.

	Available?		Use?		
	Yes	No/NR	(1)	(2)	(3)
1. Independent Study	77	11	25	49	3
2. Community Based Training	34	54	2	24	8
3. P.M. School	44	44	24	15	5
4. NYC Vocational Training Center	43	45	1	28	14
5. Adult Education Classes	27	61	4	10	13
6. Evening and Summer Schools	72	16	59	11	12
7. Work Experience Credit	72	16	33	34	5
8. Shared Instruction	56	32	3	34	19
9. School of Cooperative Tech. Ed.	31	57	4	20	7
10. Community College Classes	55	33	9	35	11

* No or no response

APPENDIX G

Questionnaire Responses: High School Principals

As noted above, 88 principals completed and returned their questionnaires. Six responses arrived after the quantitative analysis was completed, but their responses to open ended questions are incorporated in the following analysis.

1. To what extent do you believe that credit accumulation in your school is a problem?

Almost half of the principals believed that credit accumulation in their schools was a major problem. One-fourth found it no problem. Principals described a variety of situations: a school where 100 percent of the student body graduate and go on to college, a specialized high school where 10 percent of the students have trouble accumulating credit and still other schools where many students earn more credits than they need to graduate in four years.

Typical responses by principals follow:

> It is often necessary to postpone required courses/sequences to make room on students' programs for remediation and/or ESL instruction.
>
> Some students must attend evening school and summer school in order to graduate.
>
> More and more students require more than four years to complete high school.
>
> Inadequately prepared students, unmotivated students, and truants sometimes establish a pattern of failure which becomes difficult to reverse.
>
> Guidance counselors are poor leaders and careless with their planning. So, a few slower youngsters accumulate failures without recovery steps.
>
> Students require more than seven classes per day to meet requirements. I have many ESL/LEP students to prepare for college.
>
> In particular groupings, such as science and/or math, the course offerings are too limited to be obtainable for all levels of achievement.
>
> Ours is a school of highly motivated students all of whom are graduated within four years with many credits beyond the requirement.

Students who pass subjects in 9th and 10th grades successfully complete high school. Students who fail subjects in 9th and 10th grades leave the trade school and take other programs elsewhere.

As an alternative high school program, our mission is to raise students' skills; they are no longer on a degree track and credit is irrelevant.

There are too many mandated courses, including the (school) technicians program that is the equivalent of 24 credits, for students in need of remediation to hope to finish high school in four years.

Credit verification becomes a serious problem because of the difficulty in securing records from foreign countries, translation of credits and the overall condition of the records when they arrive.

2. In what ways have diploma requirements listed below (see Appendix C, question two) affected credit accumulation by most students in your school?

Principals responded:

- At least 20 percent of the principals believed that all ten requirements adversely affected credit accumulation in their schools.
- Two-thirds pointed to the State mandated remedial instruction for students failing RCTs and additional State mandated unit sequences as having an adverse effect.
- Less than 10 percent of the principals believed that any of the requirements had a positive effect on credit accumulation.
- At least 20 percent believed that in their schools all of these requirements had no effect on credit accumulation.
- It seemed inconsistent for over half of the principals to indicate that the mathematics RCT had no effect on credit accumulation and then to indicate that remedial instruction for those failing RCTs was adversely affecting credit accumulation.

3. Please describe any other State or City regulations which you believe have affected student credit accumulation.

Most of the principals believed that State or City mandated requirements formed the bulk of deterrents to credit accumulation. Some mentioned others:

> The inability to provide a grade penalty for excessive student absence encourages such absence and results in course failure.
>
> The single diploma has created problems for many students. I recommend a return to the Academic, Commercial and General diplomas.
>
> City and State regulations for the treatment of LEP students hold schools accountable for programs rather than for outcomes.
>
> Mandatory social promotion to high school despite student's proven inabilities to cope with high school work.
>
> Resource room placement (longer time needed in school). Promotion policy to high schools which "push" overage, unprepared students to high school.
>
> None as definitely as the Regs 100 (State Regulations establishing more rigorous high school graduation requirements).

4. To what extent have the achievement and attendance of students entering your school influenced their credit accumulation?

The vast majority of principals, 55 of 76 (72 percent), believed that a student's previous academic and attendance record greatly influences how he or she will perform in high school. There is nothing startling about this belief, for past performance is usually the best predictor of future performance. What is significant is the intensity with which principals expressed the view. Good attendance, in particular, seemed to ensure satisfactory credit accumulation. Some of their comments follow:

> If a large number of students had academic and attendance problems in the past, why should one assume that the magic of high school will change the situation. What goes on in the districts (and foreign countries) has a tremendous input on how our students will do in high school.
>
> There has been a continuing increase in the number of students entering high school in need of remediation. At the same time, the LEP population has risen dramatically over the past few years. In addition to the educational problems faced by these students, personal and family pressures impact negatively on their ability to attend school on a regular basis.

Our students have adult responsibilities and concomitant problems.

A large number of our students come to our school as a result of a variety of criteria: random selection by computer, age appropriateness without passing grades or good attendance, their preference, and/or Office of Zoning Integration assignments.

Students lacking motivation, with cutting and excessive absences cannot pass courses.

Students with good attendance rarely fail their classes.

Many students enter from middle schools with poor study habits and attendance patterns. Parents of these students are not attending PTA meetings from middle school days.

The more students attend school and achieve, the more they will accumulate credits.

5. Listed below (see Appendix C, question five) are possible barriers to credit accumulation. Please indicate if they have been barriers in your school.

Principals were asked to designate which of 19 possible barriers were major, minor or no barriers to credit accumulation.

- At least 60 percent of the principals view student/family factors, such as student absenteeism, personal and family problems as a major barrier.
- The same percentage view such school based factors as course cycles and the process of accrediting courses as no barrier to course accumulation.
- Such highly publicized issues as drug/alcohol abuse, pregnancy and inability to communicate in English are viewed as minor or no barriers by more than half the principals.

Principals disclosed additional barriers prevailing in their schools. They included:

Lack of child care and need to work.

Lack of familiarity with proper decorum, e.g., pledging allegiance to the flag, promptness, civility, not using radios in school.

Apathy/indifference/willingness to settle for the

> minimum.
>
> Having to care for brothers and sister.
> Poverty.

6. How are parents informed of their children's credit accumulation?
7. How are students informed of the credits they have accumulated?

Principals who noted one "most frequent practice" and one "least frequent practice" indicated that the most frequent means of informing students and parents is the transcript of a student's grades. (Transcripts are prepared by the City University's University Application Processing Center or UAPC.) In addition many high schools provide for face-to-face discussion with students. There are variations as noted in these remarks:

> Students are interviewed, given a written analysis of their credits, which they bring home to parents.
>
> When parents visit school on open school night and afternoon or through discussions with guidance counselor. Sometimes you don't ever hear from parents!
>
> We have our own "Graduation Check List."
>
> Counselors officially meet with students once or twice a school year to review records and credit.
>
> Discuss in family group.

8. Ideally all students who are falling behind in accumulating credits should receive some counseling assistance. What percentage of these students are able to receive this help? If you believe that the percentage is too low, please indicate why it is so low and what you, as principal, can do about improving the situation.

Thirty-six of the 81 (44 percent) responding to this question indicated that all students receive some counseling experience. Viewing a borough as a totality, none of the superintendents thought this was the practice. The principals had some pointed comments in response to this question.

> I would replace "satisfactory" but less than motivated appointed guidance counselors with effective program coordinators/grade advisors. It is not only the percentage who are counselled, it is the quality of the counselling that determines the effectiveness of the service given to the students. Also student programming takes up an inordinate percentage of omnibus guidance

counselor time.

Unable to reach students who are truant.

Broken appointments, failure to attend school, changing mailing addresses, poor telephone response.

Guidance caseloads are too large to adequately service all students. Any student is serviced on a case by case basis. Crisis intervention detracts from all inclusive counseling.

Counseling time is inadequate due to budgeting constraints. Counselor-student ratio is too high. Quality of time per student is poor because of high ratio.

I would like the right to hire and fire competent or incompetent guidance counselors.

Counselors must attend to a number of student personal and home problems. They have large caseloads; they must program their students in addition to counseling. The situation can be improved by assigning a grade advisor to assist each counselor.

Operative word is "some;" all get some, but many need more. High school should be funded for guidance service providers on a 1 to 150 ratio.

One homeless student can take up to six hours, a battered wife/girlfriend 12 hours and attempted suicide even longer.

9. Listed below (see Appendix C, question nine) are ConCurrent Options available in some high schools. Please indicate whether an option is available and to what extent students in your school are taking advantage of each option.

ConCurrent Options is a major programming effort of the High School Division to meet the needs of students who might benefit from additional means of accumulating credit. The ten options are available in different configurations to the high schools. Each school decides upon its own combination of programs--budget, personnel and facilities permitting.

Principals indicated that independent study, evening and summer schools and work experience credit are the most available options. The greatest use seemed to be made of evening and summer schools. Even though P.M. schools are less available, their relative use where available was greater. This option makes the most sense for many students since the program is conducted in the same school immediately after the regular school day. Except for evening and summer schools, the majority of the principals indicated that some, little or no use is made of the Options.

10. Some schools have developed other innovative practices to help students accumulate credits toward a diploma. Please describe one or two that may have been instituted in your school.

In addition to taking advantage of ConCurrent Option programs, high schools are engaged in a plethora of programs to assist students in accumulating credits. Some of these are briefly described below:

> Our school has developed a unique program with the College of Staten Island in the area of Individual Research in Science and Mathematics using a grade of 56 for the first term of a subject and giving credit for the course contingent upon the student's passing the second term of the course.
>
> Vestibule program is a combination of independent study and lab/tutoring. It is designed for pupils who fall behind due to absence.
>
> Coaching center, mock RCT exams, expanded nine period day, case management.
>
> Research projects under supervision of teacher and university-based mentors are credited; availability during school year and summer vacations.
>
> Self-contained classes for most at-risk students.
>
> Health careers, Operation Success (FEGS-Federation Employment and Guidance Services), Animal Care, Special Reservoir Program at Lehman College, Macy Program.
>
> Community service, under alternative crediting NYSED regulations, permits 40-60 students per term to earn a credit or more.
>
> Camp Success-Students spend a week at an out-of-town college participating in the educational program developed by the high school staff focusing on specific subject areas based on student need.
>
> Students in Our Varsity House attend (school) 4 days a week and City College on Friday.

11. Is there any other information you believe we should gather which might pinpoint the reasons for and suggest possible solutions to inadequate student credit accumulation?

Some of the principals' comments follow:

Should provide modems and computers to students at home; students would have greater access to instruction without physically being on the educational site.

Find out more about parent attitudes and student experiences prior to high school.

Credit accumulation is not synonymous with meeting graduation requirements. Sequencing of courses, while not a credit accumulation problem, is a problem for some students with respect to meeting graduation requirements.

Get perception of students and parents.

Mobility of students in each school could be an important factor in inadequate credit accumulation.

Many of our students don't get the necessary support from the home causing them to depend upon their own resourcefulness.

Take the view that four years is not necessarily possible for all students and that five is OK if students are getting proper support and are mastering what they need to be functioning in our economy and society.

Departmentalization shifts the focus from teaching students to teaching subjects.

We cannot maintain four years as being the standard for all students. Remediation and poor attendance plus increased Regents Action Plan requirements make it impossible for many students. Immigrant students pose another situation. We have no problem with lengthening the school stay as needed but the school is cited unfavorably. Somebody should take an historic look at earlier waves of immigration and the unique position of New York City.

You have managed to reduce the concept of a high school education to a study of credits. This makes some small points but misses all the big ones.

Need to increase school day or school year.

APPENDIX B

Educational Priorities Panel

STUDY OF CREDIT ACCUMULATION

Counselor's Questionnaire

1. **Listed below are possible barriers to credit accumulation. Please indicate if they have been barriers in your school by placing the appropriate number on each line: (1) major barrier, (2) minor barrier, (3) no barrier.**

			(1)	(2)	(3)
1.	sequencing of courses	1)	11	24	35
2.	course cycles	2)	4	16	46
3.	student mobility	3)	25	23	23
4.	student absenteeism for any reason	4)	55	15	5
5.	course availability	5)	8	30	32
6.	staff availability	6)	7	18	46
7.	credit transfer policies	7)	5	19	46
8.	overutilization of school	8)	7	18	45
9.	scheduling of remedial and other non-credit courses	9)	20	33	19
10.	programming of electives	10)	12	23	35
11.	process of accrediting courses	11)	3	6	60
12.	illness	12)	18	40	15
13.	truancy	13)	55	14	5
14.	pregnancy	14)	19	38	16
15.	drug/alcohol abuse	15)	21	36	15
16.	family problems	16)	50	24	2
17.	personal problems	17)	48	23	4
18.	little or no knowledge of English	18)	14	34	24
19.	little or no previous education	19)	15	20	22
20.	any others? (Please describe.)				

2. **How are parents informed of their children's credit accumulation? Please indicate only the most frequent practice (place a "1" on the line) and the least frequent practice (place a "2" on the line).**

			(1)	(2)
1.	by face-to-face discussion	1)	3	8
2.	by mail	2)	1	4
3.	by telephone	3)	0	10
4.	by report card	4)	25	1
5.	by other correspondence	5)	3	7
6.	they are not officially informed	6)	2	9
7.	other (Please describe.)			

3. **How are students informed of the credits they have accumulated? Please indicate only the most frequent practice (place a "1" on the line) and the least frequent practice (place a "2" on the line).**

			(1)	(2)
1.	by face-to-face discussion	1)	28	2
2.	by mail	2)	0	3
3.	by telephone	3)	0	5
4.	by report card	4)	5	3
5.	by written correspondence	5)	2	11
6.	they are not officially informed	6)	0	12
7.	other (Please describe.)			

7. **Listed below are ConCurrent Options available in some high schools. Please indicate whether an option is available and to what extent students in your school are taking advantage of each option: (1) high use (2) some use (3) little or no use.**

		Available?		Use?		
		Yes	No /NR*	(1)	(2)	(3)
1.	Independent Study	75	3	25	46	4
2.	Community Based Training	29	49	1	21	7
3.	P.M. School	48	30	20	14	14
4.	NYC Vocational Training Center	41	29	0	23	18
5.	Adult Education Classes	28	50	1	11	16
6.	Evening and Summer Schools	72	6	53	18	1
7.	Work Experience Credit	69	0	28	40	1
8.	Shared Instruction	52	26	3	23	26
9.	School of Cooperative Tech. Ed.	35	43	5	19	11
10.	Community College Classes	56	22	11	28	17

* No or no response

APPENDIX H

Questionnaire Responses: Counselors

Principals were asked by PDA to have the counselor's questionnaire completed by the counselor or advisor most familiar with the problem of insufficient credit accumulation. Seventy-eight counselors or assistant principals in charge of guidance responded to the questionnaire survey. All but two returned their forms separately from the principals' responses. The counselors' responses are described below following each question. Comments to open-ended questions are incorporated in this analysis.

1. Listed below (see Appendix D, question one) are possible barriers to credit accumulation. Please indicate if they have been barriers in your school.

Consistent with the views of principals, counselors indicated that major barriers were student and family focussed--student absenteeism or truancy and personal and family problems. The counselors also generally believed that school factors, such as course cycles, the process of accrediting courses, school utilization and credit transfer policies were no barrier to credit accumulation. A significantly larger proportion of counselors than principals thought that students' lack of knowledge of English was a major barrier (64% vs. 28%). On the other hand, only half the number of counselors thought that the scheduling of remedial and other non-credit courses was a major barrier (27% vs. 52%).

Counselors had an opportunity to indicate more barriers. They listed the following (generally elaborations of ones on the list):

> Specialized classes programmed for same period because of non-availability of rooms.
>
> Interest.
>
> Education is not a priority in some households. Students are allowed to be absent for various activities.
>
> Having no idea what is expected from them should they want to go to college.
>
> Homelessness--awaiting foster care placement. In HRA group homes.
>
> The long school day; should have a four-five period day rather than the seven-six period day.

2. How are parents informed of their children's credit accumulation?
3. How are students informed of the credits they have accumulated?

They, like the principals, noted that schools generally informed parents via report cards and students through face-to-face discussion. Most schools use transcripts of course grades. Many respondents indicated that guidance counselors meet with students twice a year to review course accumulation as well as plan the next term's program.

4. Are there any scheduling or programming mandates in your school which affect student credit accumulation?

Most of the counselors indicated that their schools had no additional mandates beyond those established by the State and the Board of Education. There were some exceptions including the additional courses and sequences in the specialized schools and Latin in one of the high schools. Some others are noted below:

> "Introduction to Occupations" courses are given as stand alone courses. "Singleton" (e.g., Regents Physics, math 5,6) and block "shop" sequences limit programming flexibility.
>
> Students who have multiple failures are not permitted to have a full program. Students may not double in subjects that they fail.
>
> Some courses are credited on a yearly basis. If a student passes the first half and fails the second half, he/she must repeat the year.
>
> Each student is required to attend an eight period day with an inclusive lunch. Credits average six per term.
>
> Remediation, Remediation, Remediation.
>
> All courses are required.
>
> Federal job certification and state requirements/city requirements.
>
> A vocational class is usually in a two or three period block and is scheduled only certain times of the day. This limits programming to meet individual student needs and often necessitates early morning classes.

5. Please describe the review procedure used for student schedules.

Virtually all respondents described the semiannual review process as consisting of these elements:

1. Student meets with counselor or grade advisor to discuss academic achievement, consider credits accumulated and plan possible courses,

2. Courses are selected,

3. The program office is informed of choices,

4. There is usually a written program report to be reviewed with the parent,

5. Students usually have an opportunity to change their programs the first week of the new semester.

A number of variations are described below:

Students are pre-programmed by homeroom advisors (with student input). Schedules are then checked in guidance office.

Students' schedules are reviewed by the Program Chairman, the Grade Advisor, the Guidance Counselor, the Department Chair people, and the Assistant Principal Guidance for a variety of reasons such as appropriateness, class size, scheduling of electives.

1. Record and report card are reviewed to determine student's needs. 2. Mandated requirements such as Chapter I, ESL, Vocational mandates, et. al., are considered. 3. The guidance counselor determines courses needed. 4. Student's tentative program given to program coordinator.

Student fills out course selection sheet which is reviewed with subject teacher. Student is given appointment with counselor to review course selection sheet and to review past academic performance and to do educational planning. Parental involvement is also requested.

Students who want additional independent study opportunities, who want a class instead of lunch or who want to have additional class periods are interviewed by their grade advisors to determine ability and motivational factors.

1. Programs planned based on second report card grades.
2. Adjustments made based on final semester grades and recommendations of subject class teachers and department supervisors.

6.1. Please indicate in what ways formal or informal school policies concerning the number of courses a student may attend affect scheduling decisions and student credit accumulation.

According to counselors' responses, students, depending upon the high school they are attending, may take from six to nine credit bearing courses a day (assuming no non-credit bearing courses are being taken). If courses available in a P.M. school from 3:00 to 6:00 P.M. are added, a student could conceivably enroll in an additional two courses for a total of 10 or 11 courses. Here are typical responses:

> Eight courses a term plus lunch.
>
> Length of school day, class size, singletons.
>
> The normal load would be six-seven.
>
> Usually a maximum of seven per term--average is six credits, gym and lunch. 90% of student body attends an eight period day.
>
> No limits.
>
> a. Mandated subjects , ESL, Resource Room, Chapter I must be considered first. b. Student personal needs such as jobs, child care, et. al., are important. c. School budget determines number of classes. d. Clinical requirement for vocational subjects are mandated by state.
>
> Eight during the school day. Two in the after school day program. Four in evening school.
>
> 1. No doubling, 2. Courses are offered sequentially. No off-term scheduling available. (few exceptions) 3. Budget allocations limit number of classes that can be taken.
>
> School utilizes P.M. school, zero period classes and independent study to maximize credit accumulation.

6.2. Please indicate in what ways formal or informal school policies concerning the number of academic courses a student may attend affect scheduling decisions and student credit accumulations.

Here again the range of academic courses a student may take was wide, from four to unlimited (presumably 9 or 10). Most indicated six academic classes are permitted. Most counselors did not directly answer this question. They pointed out rather that schools provide more than sufficient opportunity to enroll in academic classes to meet requirements. The few limits are the length of the school day, occupational education sequences, lunch, gym and mandated courses which may not carry credit. Typical responses were:

> Some students are limited by vocational programming requisites.
>
> There is no limit to the number of academic courses a student may have.
>
> Maximum is four academic periods per day only!
>
> In-house requirements exceed local diploma mandate.
>
> All are available for our students. School policy support students taking many courses.

6.3. Please indicate in what ways formal or informal school policies concerning the number of non-credit courses a student may attend affect scheduling decisions and student credit accumulation.

According to the responding counselors, schools have few policies concerning non-credit courses. In fact, many schools offer no non-credit courses except gym and resource room. Remedial courses are generally designed so that they carry at least 1/2 credit. Obviously being required to enroll in even 1/2 credit remedial courses (because of low DRP or MAT math scores or failing an RCT) necessarily reduces the opportunity to accumulate credits. There are, however, limits expressed by some schools on how many remedial courses a student may take at any one time. Other have no such policies. Some comments follow:

> Remedial courses carry 1/2 credit weight. Usually two remedial courses if necessary are scheduled.
>
> One to three permitted.
>
> A student will not be scheduled for a skill's class and resource room at the same time.
>
> Average two
>
> No limit.

6.4. Please indicate in what ways formal or informal school policies concerning the number of electives a student may attend affect scheduling decisions and student credit accumulation.

Responses to this question described the variety present in the high schools. Apparently, as in other matters involving credit accumulation, there is no Board- or borough-wide policy concerning electives. The result is that the number of electives a student may take and when he or she may take them are functions of the school he or she attends. Some comments illustrate this:

> Few electives can be chosen beyond required courses in an eight period day.
>
> None (vocational sequence courses are mandated).
>
> Formal policy (unlimited).
>
> Can take 20 electives.
>
> Usually one, if an elective is offered here or at a neighboring college.
>
> In the 9th and 10th grades, practically none. In the 11th and 12th grades probably from two or three.
>
> Based on diploma requirement, and what is available.
>
> The number of electives takes room in a student's schedule making little room for making up failures.
>
> No effect, though academic courses mandated must be taken.
>
> As many as needed.
>
> Electives are limited because of limited staffing.

7. Listed below (see Appendix D, question 7) are ConCurrent Options available in some high schools. Please indicate whether an option is available and to what extent students in your school are taking advantage of each option.

Counselors seemed to agree with principals about the availability and use of these options. The most frequently used is evening and summer schools, with independent study and work experience credit noted almost as frequently. The schools in which these counselors worked seemed to have on the average at least six different options available to help students to accumulate credit toward graduation. It is surprising to note that only 48 of the 80 counselors indicated that a P.M. school was available in their schools.

8. Some schools have developed other innovative practices to help students accumulate credits toward a diploma. Please describe one or two that may have been instituted in your school.

Counselors mentioned numerous programs which were designed to assist students to accumulate credit toward graduation. Some (other than ConCurrent Options) are briefly noted below:

FEGS Operation Success and Attendance Improvement.

Mentoring program with New York Alliance for the Public Schools.

Vestibule program is used. The students can make up credits they have failed, bring up testing grades, and do independent study work.

(School) Educational Acceleration Program through flexible/modular scheduling allows student to attend 3 six-week courses per "cycle" with the term divided into three different cycles. This amounts to an opportunity to accumulate nine credits per term.

House Plan Program for "hold-over" students with a coordinator and guidance counselor assigned for personal individual contact and follow-up.

Social studies elective--"community service" in which students perform service for non-profit community organizations and study volunteerism in American society.

May attend the executive internship program for six months and receive as many as five appropriate credits.

Physical education programs in community art/music; cultural participation in drama groups/music.

9. Is there any other information you believe we should gather which might pinpoint the reasons for and suggest possible solutions to inadequate student credit accumulation?

Counselors provided a variety of views as to the causes of inadequate credit accumulation. They included:

Educational habits formed before high school: attendance, homework, cutting, reading deficiency, parent involvement.

Small-group meetings with a mentor (homeroom teachers, advisors) held weekly to check on student's program might be suggested.

In most cases, in our school, it is a question of emotional problems, family problems or a case of exaggerated examples of normal adolescent developmental problems. These interact with a demanding academic program and some bright students just can't hack it at this point in their lives.

Requirement of seven terms of physical education should be reduced in vocational school which requires "shop" classes for 2/3/4 block periods.

Too many outside and family responsibilities.

This (credit accumulation, per se) does not appear to be a problem here. Poverty! Also lack of family support. Unrealistic goals on the part of society. N.Y.C. high schools are too large.

1. A belief system that belies education as a way to be successful 2. Cultural pressures that mitigate against school as work--work for monetary pay is only value 3. Inability to defer short term gratification for long term goal. 4. System fosters infantilism at a time when youngsters are working toward independence and adulthood. 5. Youngsters perceive themselves as victims powerless to effect change except through deviance.

Ask kids! Break up big schools!

Welfare letters should only be given to students who come to class rather than just on the school register.

Why not examine how many students coming from community JHS and IS are not adequately prepared to do HS work? What's wrong with students taking more than four years to finish high school? You make it sound that the high schools are to be faulted for this. With all the pressures on HS students, those who take more than four years to graduate, schools should be congratulated for not giving up on them.

We offer the opportunity to accumulate the necessary credits for graduation. However, outside economic, social and family pressures are the most serious causes of inadequate credit accumulation.

APPENDIX I

Telephone Interviews of Principals and Counselors

As a follow-up of their questionnaire responses, PDA conducted phone interviews of eight principals and seven counselors, the latter serving in the same schools as the principals. Listed below are the questions asked of both groups and their most frequent responses. Various programs were briefly described. Respondents thought the programs were helping students to accumulate credits, but there did not appear to be any systematic evaluation of outcomes.

1. I would appreciate your telling me more about a special program (as indicated in the questionnaire response) or what your school does to deal with students who aren't earning sufficient credits to graduate in four years (other than ConCurrent Options).

Principals and counselors briefly described programs which they claimed were helping students earn credits:

> The Attendance Improvement and Dropout Prevention program seems to be working well (wasn't very enthusiastic)
>
> Police and Law classes involving joint teacher/police officer teams.
>
> A special "Holding Power" program using individual and group guidance sessions and a six week parenting program.
>
> The "Omega" program for 10th graders who should be in the 11th grade involving additional independent study in a regular course so that the student can get more credit from one course.
>
> Using zero periods to give examinations missed by students.
>
> Developed homework helpers program after school.
>
> The school has a GED program. It also has the Reservoir Program with Lehman College in which college students work with high school students.
>
> Have a four cycle program. Can start fresh each time. Give partial credit for completed work. Opposed to just giving credit for "seat time."

Developed a close relationship with two colleges--Lehman and Middlebury. A strong incentive to do well in school.

2. Is there any discernible trend or pattern of student credit accumulation in your school?

Principals and counselors generally agreed that students are staying in school longer, and most believed that the students needed the extra time.

Students are staying longer.

High failure rate among RCTs requires remediation. Fail large number of courses.

Since the school became coed, the students seems to be doing better.

Gut feeling--getting worse.

Students are staying longer--see the end of the tunnel.

They have to stay longer to meet the new graduation requirements.

Using more techniques to deal with those who are having difficulty accumulating credits.

Occasionally a few students have to take summer or evening courses to get the diploma.

Many students need a five year high school program.

3. In your school, excluding course failure, what is the major reason students don't accumulate credits at a fast enough rate?

In responding to this question, principals and counselors added reasons not mentioned in questionnaire responses or emphasized certain reasons.

RCT failure results in remediation course with little or no credit.

Attendance. The students aren't in school.

Annual organization which requires that a student pass both segments of a year course to get credit.

Sequencing, not all courses offered every term.

Over-the-counter students and language barriers.

Don't show up for examinations.

Ninety percent of suspension hearings, no father or mother shows up, no family support.

Lose large number of students from our vocational high school at the end of the 9th grade; they transfer to zoned school.

Self-esteem is terrible; they don't feel that they belong here; we need more teacher interest in the students. Parent input is missed.

Students have to travel a long distance to this school; they miss the first period.

4. What is the effect of non-credit bearing courses on earning credits toward graduation? How serious is the problem?

Principals and counselors reiterated their responses on questionnaires, but also added comments which hadn't appeared before.

Students do receive 1/2 credit for the remedial courses.

Resource rooms are a problem--no credit.

Can earn up to two credits for remediation. Often students stay an extra period.

Use P.M. school for remedial instruction.

Try to use one or two periods of gym for remediation instruction or resource room.

All courses carry full credit.

5. How does your school handle entering students with major academic deficits or attendance problems?

Both principals and counselors focused on planning for the needs of students before they entered the high school.

Counselors review records of feeder schools.

Counselors visit feeder schools to discuss incoming students with staff.

Program provides special assistance via an academic center.

Meet with entering students in the feeder schools to discuss problems.

Tutors, Academy and Partnerships with business.

Becoming more and more difficult.

6. Is there anything special your school does in the 9th or 10th grades for incoming students?

A major high school initiative of a few years ago, the Ninth Year Houses, was not emphasized as much as expected.

Uses Houses, assigned counselor and coordinator.

In May counselors meet individually with 95 percent of the incoming students to develop plans for their education in the high school.

Provide freshman orientation the week before the regular term begins.

Developed a new Culture House for those interested in the Arts.

Students participate in guidance sessions within the shop classes.

Assign counselors to remain four years with the same group of entering students.

Difficult to deal with 40 feeder schools.

Develop small Houses of 150 students; counselors visit homes.

Personalize programming and scheduling through interviews.

Developed a two week summer program for at-risk children before starting 9th grade. It involves two trips a week to a nearby college and 8 days of counseling and labs.

The Goal of ConCurrent Options Programming

Our efforts and resources are directed at providing supplemental educational offerings that will enable students to stay in school and meet the requirements for a high school diploma.

WHO:
Students currently overage for their grade who want to graduate with a diploma

WHAT:
Supplemental credit earning opportunities that expand a school's programming options

WHEN:
Day • late afternoon • evening weekdays • weekends

WHERE:
- Your school
- Other NYC schools
- Adult Education Facilities
- Colleges
- Community Based Organizations
- Work sites
- Home

WHY:
- To earn more credits
- To allow greater flexibility in scheduling
- To provide a greater variety of interesting program options

HOW:
By utilizing, in a systematic way, the variety of supplemental educational opportunities available throughout the city

Office of ConCurrent Options

Technical assistance, training and supplemental funding is available through the ConCurrent Options Office. Individual schools should make initial requests for assistance to their Superintendent's Office.

NYC Bd. Of Education
Division of High Schools

**Alternative High Schools
and Programs**

Office of ConCurrent Options

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Alternative High Schools and Programs
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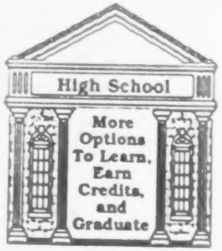
ConCurrent Options Programming

Supplemental Programming for Students Overage for their Grade


High School
More Options To Learn, Earn Credits, and Graduate

New York City Bd. of Education
Division of High Schools
Alternative High Schools and Programs

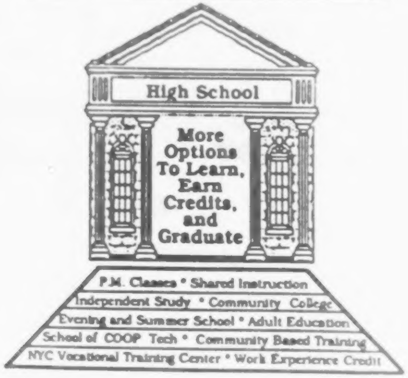
Office of ConCurrent Options
351 West 18th Street Rm.138
New York, NY 10011
(212) 691-9839/42
FAX (212) 691-9732

Joseph R. Salvati, Project Director
ConCurrent Options Programming

What is ConCurrent Options?

ConCurrent Options programming provides students who are overage for their grade level with supplemental educational options that allows them to remain in school, earn additional credits and eventually graduate with a diploma. A student is no longer limited to the Monday through Friday, 8:30 to 3:00 p.m. typical schedule or the fixed courses of study offered at his or her home school.

ConCurrent Options is programming designed to meet the varied needs of many at-risk students. Expanded opportunities to earn diploma credits can encourage students to remain in school, meet the increasingly difficult graduation requirements and earn a high school diploma.


High School
More Options To Learn, Earn Credits, and Graduate
P.M. Classes • Shared Instruction
Independent Study • Community College
Evening and Summer School • Adult Education
School of COOP Tech • Community Based Training
NYC Vocational Training Center • Work Experience Credit

What type of student can benefit from ConCurrent Options?

Students who are overage for their grade often become discouraged about their progress in earning the necessary credits for a high school diploma. These students may be scheduled for a variety of supplemental offerings to help narrow the gap in the pursuit of a high school diploma.

Students with the following characteristics may be appropriate for ConCurrent Options:

1. Overage for their grade.
2. Exhibit failure in school because of:
   - a lack of interest in available program offerings
   - personal or family problems interfering with regular school attendance
   - frustration over the lack of progress toward a diploma
3. Have the basic academic, social and emotional requirements for successfully participating in one or more supplemental options.

Students are eligible for consideration for ConCurrent Options, if their counselors feel that they are appropriately matched with an option and agree to meet the specified requirements for credit.

ConCurrent Options Programming

• Independent Study
Individual students contract to complete a credited course as an independent study project. There are three types:
1) Paper and pencil courses
2) Computer Assisted Instruction
3) Mentoring/Internships.

• Community Based Training
Community Based Organizations, including public institutions and non-profit organizations, offer a variety of training opportunities that may be acceptable for high school independent study credit.

• P.M. School
Many high schools now offer select classes for students to earn credit during the hours of 3:00 to 6:00 p.m.

• NYC Vocational Training Center
NYCVTC is an industrially based school experience. Students attend half day vocational training programs at one of several training sites located throughout the city.

• Adult Education Classes
Appropriate high school students may take select adult education courses for diploma credit. Students should be at least 17 years of age.

• Evening and Summer Schools
Counselors may consider referring any high school student who may benefit from evening and summer school. Evening school students must be at least 16 years of age.

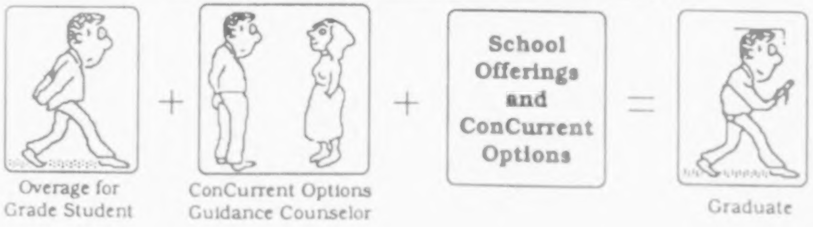
• Work Experience Credit
Co-Op Ed. Coordinators assist students in structuring their part time jobs for meeting related high school credit requirements.

• Shared Instruction
Vocational program sequences are offered to students on a part-time basis at more than fourteen New York City vocational schools.

• School of Cooperative Technical Education
SCTE provides students with the opportunity to earn up to four credits per term in addition to their regular instructional program at their home schools. Vocational/technical education courses are offered in *"state of the industry"* shops.

• Community College Classes
Collaborative programs provide opportunities for earning high school diploma credit.

Formula For Success


+
+
School Offerings and ConCurrent Options
=
Overage for Grade Student
ConCurrent Options Guidance Counselor
Graduate

Appendix VI

Section 100.5 of the Commissioner's Regulations

100.5 Diploma requirements.

(a) *General requirements for a Regents or a local high school diploma.*

(1) Students first entering grade 9 in 1982, 1983 or 1984 shall earn at least 16 units of credit or their equivalent, as determined by the commissioner, to receive a local high school diploma, and 18 units of credit or their equivalent, as determined by the commissioner, to receive a Regents high school diploma. Such units of credit shall include:

(i) English, 4 units;

(ii) social studies, including a year of American history, 3 units;

(iii) mathematics, 1 unit, provided that students first entering grade 9 in 1984 shall earn at least 2 units of credit in mathematics as set forth in paragraph (7) of this subdivision;

(iv) science, 1 unit, provided that students first entering grade 9 in 1984 shall earn at least 2 units of credit in science as set forth in paragraph (8) of this subdivision, and

(v) health, ½ unit.

(2) Students first entering grade 9 in 1985 and thereafter shall have earned at least 18½ units of credit or their equivalent, as determined by the commissioner, in order to receive either a Regents or local high school diploma. Such units of credit shall include:

(i) English, 4 units of credit;

(ii) social studies, 4 units of credit as set forth in paragraph (6) of this subdivision;

(iii) science, 2 units of credit as set forth in paragraph (8) of this subdivision;

(iv) mathematics, 2 units of credit as set forth in paragraph (7) of this subdivision;

(v) art and/or music, 1 unit of credit, and

(vi) health education, ½ unit of credit in accordance with the requirements set forth in section 135.3(c) of this Title.

(3) All students shall have earned the equivalent of 2 units of credit in physical education in accordance with the requirements set forth in section 135.4(c)(2)(ii) of this Title. Such units of credit shall not count towards the required units of credit set forth in paragraphs (1) or (2) of this subdivision. A student who has completed the diploma requirements as set forth in paragraphs (1) or (2) of this subdivision in fewer than 8 semesters, and who is otherwise eligible to receive a diploma, shall not be required to continue enrollment in high school for the sole purpose of completing the physical education requirements as set forth in this paragraph, if the school, upon request of the student's parent or guardian, wishes to grant such student a high school diploma prior to the completion of his or her eighth semester.

(4) Regents competency testing program.

(i) Except as otherwise provided in subparagraph (ii) and (iii) of this paragraph, all students shall demonstrate competency in the basic skills:

(*a*) by passing either the Regents Competency Test in Reading and the Regents Competency Test in Writing, or the Regents Comprehensive Examination in English; and

(*b*) by passing either the Regents Competency Test in Mathematics, or a Regents examination in mathematics or business mathematics;

(*c*) for students first entering grade 9 in 1986 and thereafter, by passing either the Regents Competency Test in American history and government, or the Regents examination in American history and government;

(*d*) for students first entering grade 9 in 1987 and thereafter, by passing either the Regents Competency Test in science or a Regents examination in science; and

(*e*) for students first entering grade 9 in 1988 and thereafter, by passing either the Regents Competency Test in global studies or the Regents examination in global studies.

(ii) A student who has not passed the examinations set forth in subparagraph (i) of this paragraph because of extraordinary administrative circumstances not caused by the willful act of the student or of a teacher or administrator may demonstrate competency in academic skills comparable to that required by subparagraph (i) of this paragraph through alternative tests approved by the commissioner. Each school district or nonpublic school shall apply to the department, in a format prescribed by the commissioner, for permission to use such tests.

(iii) The principal shall review the transcript of each student first entering a New York State school after the beginning of grade 7 to determine whether or not the student has adequate preparation in science to take the Regents Competency Test in science. The principal may exempt from the Regents Competency Test requirement in science set forth in clause (d) of subparagraph (i) of this paragraph any such student determined to lack adequate preparation in science.

(iv) Remedial instruction. All students who fail the Regents competency tests in reading, writing, mathematics, American history and government, science or global studies shall be provided appropriate remedial instruction designed to enable them to pass such tests by the time they are otherwise qualified to graduate. A student who shall be provided remedial instruction, and the parent or guardian of such student, shall be notified in writing, by the principal, of the test results and the plan for remedial instruction. Such remedial instruction shall begin no later than the commencement of the school semester immediately following the semester in which the test was administered.

(5) Transfer students.

(i) The principal shall evaluate the transcripts of all students entering a New York State high school, for the first time, after the beginning of grade 9. Based on a student's past academic record as indicated in the student's transcript, the principal shall award such student the appropriate units of credit towards a local high school diploma.

(ii) Each such transfer student shall meet the requirements of the Regents competency testing program as set forth in paragraph (4) of this subdivision, provided that the principal shall review the transcript of each student first entering a New York State high school in grade 11 or 12 to determine the need for the student to meet the Regents competency test requirements. The principal may exempt such student from these requirements for those tests ordinarily taken and passed before the date of the student's entry.

(iii) A student transferring between high schools in grade 11 or 12 may be exempt from the second language requirements for a Regents diploma, as set forth in paragraph (3) and clause (5)(ii)(*b*) of subdivision (b) of this section, if the language in which the student began a second language sequence in grade 9 or 10 is not offered in the school to which the student has transferred. In such cases, the student shall complete 3 units of credit in second languages but not necessarily in a single language.

(6) All students first entering grade 9 in 1985 and thereafter shall earn 4 units of credit in social studies in accordance with the following:

(i) Such requirement shall include 1 unit of credit in American history;

(ii) Such requirement shall include ½ unit of credit in participation in government and ½ unit of credit in economics.

(iii) A student shall be exempted from the provisions of subparagraph (ii) of this paragraph to the extent that such student demonstrates, through department-approved examinations or such other means as may be required by the commissioner, an acceptable level of knowledge of participation in government and/or economics, in which case the required fourth unit of credit in social studies shall be met through appropriate electives.

(7) All students first entering grade 9 in 1984 and thereafter shall earn 2 units of credit in mathematics in accordance with the following criteria:

(i) The second unit of credit in mathematics shall deepen the understanding or broaden the application of a student's mathematical concepts beyond the general high school mathematics program and in accordance with criteria established by the commissioner; and

(ii) The second unit of credit in mathematics shall be taken after a student passes the Regents competency test in mathematics, or a Regents examination in mathematics or business mathematics. Students failing to pass such a test or examination may take the second unit of credit in mathematics, provided that the syllabus for such unit of credit is a State or local syllabus approved by the commissioner. All such syllabi shall meet the criteria for a second unit of credit as set forth in subparagraph (i) of this paragraph.

(8) All students first entering grade 9 in 1984 and thereafter shall earn 2 units of credit in science in accordance with the following criteria:

(i) The second unit of credit in science shall deepen the understanding or broaden a student's application of life, physical and/or earth sciences beyond the level in the State science syllabi for grades 7, 8, and 9 and in accordance with criteria established by the commissioner; and

(ii) For students first entering grade 9 in 1987 and thereafter, the second unit of credit in science shall be taken after a student passes either the Regents competency test in science or a Regents examination in science. Students failing to pass such a test or examination may take the second unit of credit in science, provided that the syllabus for such unit of credit is a State or local syllabus approved by the commissioner. All such syllabi shall meet the criteria for a second unit of credit as set forth in subparagraph (i) of this paragraph.

(b) *Additional requirements for the Regents diploma.*

(1) In order to obtain a Regents diploma, students first entering grade 9 in 1982, 1983, and 1984 shall successfully complete a sequence of 3 units of credit in one of the following areas: science, mathematics, a second language, music, art or occupational education subjects. Such units of credit shall be included in the eighteen units of credit required pursuant to paragraph (a)(1) of this section.

(2) In order to obtain a Regents diploma, students first entering grade 9 in 1985 and thereafter shall successfully complete:

(i) either:

(*a*) a sequence of 3 units of credit in each of 2 occupational education subjects, or in each of 2 second languages, or in each of 2 of the following areas: mathematics, science, a second language, occupational education, art or music, provided that, for students first entering grade 9 in 1988 and thereafter, 3-unit sequences in each of 2 occupational education subjects may not be used to meet the requirements of this clause and each 3-unit sequence in occupational education shall meet the requirements of section 100.2(h)(3) of this Part; or

(*b*) a sequence of 3 units of credit in mathematics, science, a second language, an occupational education subject, art or music, and a sequence of 5 units of credit in either English or social studies, provided that, for students first entering grade 9 in 1988 and thereafter, such 3-unit sequence in occupational education meets the requirements of section 100.2(h)(3) of this Part; or

(*c*) a sequence of 5 units of credit in mathematics, science, a second language, an occupational education subject, art or music, provided that a student selecting a sequence of 5 units of credit in a second language may use such sequence to meet the requirements set forth in subparagraph (ii) of this paragraph, and further provided that for students first entering grade 9 in 1988 and thereafter, such a sequence of 5 units of credit in an occupational education subject shall meet the requirements of section 100.2(h)(4) of this Part; and

(ii) a sequence of 3 units of credit in a second language, except that:

(*a*) for students first entering grade 9 in 1985, 1986, 1987, 1988 or 1989 who take a sequence of not less than 5 units of credit in occupational education subjects, art or music, the 3-unit sequence required by this subparagraph may be in a second language or in any other subject area; and

(*b*) a student identified as having a handicapping condition may be excused from the second language requirement set forth in this subparagraph if such student's individualized education program indicates that such requirement is not appropriate to the student's special educational needs.

(3) Any 3 or 5 units of credit sequence in a second language shall consist of courses in a single language.

(4) Units of credit received by a student pursuant to paragraph (2) of this subdivision shall be included in the 18½ units of credit required pursuant to paragraph (a)(2) of this section, provided that a sequence in occupational education may be applied toward a Regents diploma only if such sequence has been approved by the department.

(5) In order to obtain a Regents diploma, a student shall pass the required Regents examinations as follows:

(i) For students first entering grade 9 in 1982, 1983, and 1984:

(*a*) the Regents comprehensive examination in English;

(*b*) the Regents comprehensive examination in social studies; and

(*c*) the Regents examinations, or their equivalents, in the courses comprising the student's required sequence.

(ii) For students first entering grade 9 in 1985 and thereafter:

(*a*) the Regents comprehensive examination in English;

(*b*) the Regents comprehensive examination in a second language, except that students identified in clause (2)(ii)(*a*) of this subdivision or excused from the second language requirement pursuant to clause (2)(ii)(*b*) shall not be required to pass such examination;

(*c*) the Regents examination in American history and government;

(*d*) Regents examinations for the courses in mathematics required pursuant to subparagraph (a)(2)(iv) and paragraph (a)(7) of this section;

(*e*) Regents examinations for the courses in science required pursuant to subparagraph (a)(2)(iii) and paragraph (a)(8) of this section; and

(*f*) Regents examinations, as required by the commissioner, for the courses in any sequence followed pursuant to paragraph (2) of this subdivision.

(iii) For students first entering grade 9 in 1987 and thereafter:

(*a*) the Regents examination in global studies; and

(*b*) occupational education proficiency examinations, as defined in section 100.1(k) of this Part, for any occupational education sequence for which such tests are available.

(6) For students first entering grade 9 in 1985 and thereafter, a unit of credit towards a Regents diploma, in courses where no Regents or State test exists, other than courses in mathematics or science, shall be awarded only if:

(i) the unit of study is taught in accordance with a State syllabus approved by the department for use in a Regents-level course; or

(ii) if no State syllabus for the course is available, the unit of study is taught in accordance with a locally developed syllabus approved by the department for use in a Regents-level course.

(c) *Additional requirements for the local diploma.*

(1) In order to obtain a local diploma, students first entering grade 9 in 1982, 1983, or 1984 shall successfully complete a sequence of 3 units of credit in one of the following areas: science, mathematics, a second language, music, art or occupational education subjects. Such units of credit shall be included in the 16 units of credit required pursuant to paragraph (a)(1) of this section.

(2) In order to obtain a local diploma, students first entering grade 9 in 1985 and thereafter shall successfully complete:

(i) a sequence of 3 units of credit in each of 2 occupational education subjects, or in each of 2 second languages, or in each of 2 of the following areas: mathematics, science, a second language, occupational education, art or music, provided that, for students first entering grade 9 in 1988 and thereafter, 3-unit sequences in each of 2 occupational education subjects may not be used to meet the requirements of this clause and each 3-unit sequence in occupational education shall meet the requirements of section 100.2(h)(3) of this Part; or

(ii) a sequence of 3 units of credit in mathematics, science, a second language, an occupational education subject, art or music, and a sequence of 5 units of credit in either English or social studies, provided that, for students first entering grade 9 in 1988 and thereafter, each 3-unit sequence in occupational education shall meet the requirements of section 100.2(h)(3) of this Part; or

(iii) a sequence of 5 units of credit in mathematics, science, a second language, an occupational education subject, art or music, provided that for students first entering grade 9 in 1988 and thereafter, such a sequence of 5 units of credit in an occupational education subject shall meet the requirements of section 100.2(h)(4) of this Part, and

3) Any 3 or 5 units of credit sequence in a second language shall consist of courses in a single language.

4) Units of credit received by a student pursuant to paragraph (2) of this subdivision shall be included in the 18½ units of credit required pursuant to paragraph (a)(2) of this section, provided that a sequence in occupational education may be applied towards a local diploma if such sequence has been approved by the department.

5) In order to obtain a local diploma, students first entering grade 9 in 1988 and thereafter, and taking an approved occupational education sequence, shall pass the appropriate occupational education proficiency examinations, where available, as defined in section 100.1(k) of this Part.

Alternatives to specific Regents and local diploma requirements.

(1) A student may earn a maximum of 6½ units of credit for either a Regents or local diploma without completing units of study for such units of credit, if:

(i) based on the student's past academic performance, the superintendent of a school district or the chief administrative officer of a nonpublic school, or his or her designee, determines that the student will benefit academically by exercising this alternative;

(ii) the student achieves a score of at least 85 percent, or its equivalent as determined by the commissioner, on a State-developed or State-approved examination;

(iii) the student passes an oral examination or successfully completes a special project to demonstrate proficiency, as determined by the principal, in the subject matter area; and

(iv) the student attends school, or received substantially equivalent instruction elsewhere, in accordance with section 3204(2) of the Education Law, until the age of sixteen, pursuant to sections 3204 and 3205 of the Education Law.

(2) Art and/or music.

(i) A student may obtain the unit of credit in art and/or music required pursuant to subparagraph (a)(2)(v) of this section in the following manner:

(*a*) by participating in a school's major performing organization such as band, chorus, orchestra, dance group or theatre group; or

(*b*) by participating, only in exceptional situations, in an advanced out-of-school art or music activity. Credit for such participation shall be upon recommendation by the student's art or music teacher, shall be approved by the art or music department chairperson, if there is one, and by the school principal, and shall be consistent with the goals and objectives of the school's art and/or music program.

(ii) A student may receive a unit of credit for participation in such activities if such participation is equivalent to a unit of study, or a student may receive ½ unit of credit for such activity equivalent to ½ unit of study.

(3) Occupationally related mathematics and science.

(i) Regents diploma. Students first entering grade 9 in 1984 and thereafter may use 1 unit of credit earned in an occupationally related science or mathematics course, a Regents science or a Regents mathematics course, both towards meeting the science or mathematics requirement for a Regents diploma and towards an approved sequence in occupational education, only if such courses are approved by the commissioner for such purpose. For occupationally related science and mathematics courses, such approval shall be granted only upon the submission of evidence that such courses are equivalent to Regents courses in science and mathematics. However, the unit of credit earned for such a course shall count as only 1 unit of credit towards the 18½ units of credit required for a Regents diploma.

(ii) Local diploma. Students first entering grade 9 in 1984 and thereafter and taking an approved sequence in occupational education may use 1 unit of credit earned in the occupationally related mathematics course or the business mathematics course, and/or 1 unit of credit earned in the occupationally related science course towards meeting the mathematics and/or science requirements or sequence requirements in mathematics or science for a local diploma, provided that such courses shall be taught in accordance with the appropriate State-developed or State-approved syllabi.

(4) Scores obtained on appropriate examinations of the College Entrance Examination Board and the American College Testing Program, as designated by the commissioner, may be used in lieu of the corresponding Regents examination requirements for a Regents high school diploma, required pursuant to subdivisions (a)(1)-(2) and (b) of this section, and to satisfy the requirements of the Regents competency testing program set forth in paragraph (a)(4) of this section.

Accelerated graduation. Notwithstanding any other provisions of this section, students seeking to complete the diploma requirements prescribed by this section in less than four years shall be subject to the diploma requirements applicable to a student who first entered grade 9 four years prior to the school year in which the diploma is to be awarded, provided that a student graduating at the end of the fall semester shall be subject to the graduation requirements in effect for the preceding school year.

(f) Students studying abroad.

(1) For students pursuing a local diploma and spending a period of time studying in another country, the principal shall evaluate the course work and assign the appropriate units of credit towards a local diploma. A student shall complete all required Regents competency tests, even if such tests would normally be taken during the period of time when the student was studying in another country, provided that the student may take such Regents competency tests upon return to the home school.

(2) For students pursuing a Regents diploma and spending a period of time studying in another country, the principal shall evaluate the course work and assign the appropriate units of credit towards a Regents diploma only after such student has passed the required Regents examinations upon return to his or her home school. With the approval of the department, appropriate units of credit may be assigned towards the fulfillment of the requirements for a Regents diploma, for courses where no Regents examination exists.

110 LIVINGSTON STREET
BROOKLYN, N.Y. 11201

SCHONHAUT
lor (Acting)

February 25, 1988

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CHANCELLOR'S REGULATIONS - STUDENTS VOLUME UPDATE NO. 13, 19[illegible]-19[illegible]

TO: COMMUNITY SUPERINTENDENTS, ALL SUPERINTENDENTS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS, HEADS OF OFFICES AND PRINCIPALS OF ALL DAY SCHOOLS

FROM: Charles I. Schonhaut, Chancellor (Acting)

SUBJECT: CHANCELLOR'S REGULATION A-502 - STUDENTS VOLUME HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Enclosed is a revision to the Chancellor's Regulations, Students Volume. Please place this revised regulation in your copy of the Students Volume.

The following table will aid you in placing the regulation in its proper place.

Subject	Regulation Number	New Page Numbers	Date Issued	Substitute For Old Pages	Date Issued
High School Graduation Requirements	A-502	1 to 17	2/25/88	1 to 14	3/1/88

CIS:cms
Attachment

CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Regulation of the Chancellor

Category: STUDENTS

No.: A-502

Subject: HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Page: 1 of 17

Issued: 2/25/88

ABSTRACT

This Regulation updates and supersedes Regulation of the Chancellor A-502, dated March 1, 1982 regarding students who entered grade 9 in September, 1985 and thereafter.*

The requirements for high school graduation established herein are in accordance with Part 100 of the Regulations of the New York State Commissioner of Education. Students satisfactorily completing the basic course requirements must also pass the required New York State Competency and/or Regents examinations to earn a diploma.

I. General Principles

A. This Regulation establishes the minimum requirements for a high school diploma. However, students should be encouraged to reach a level of achievement well beyond these basic requirements.

B. Students should be offered the widest latitude in the selection of areas of concentration and courses within the required subject areas. While the usual high school academic year is composed of two semesters of approximately eighteen weeks, courses may be offered utilizing alternative patterns such as four or five week cycles, flexible or modular scheduling, independent study and other plans that provide equitable and equivalent instruction. Schools are responsible for counseling students concerning the variety of options and opportunities that are available to them and for helping students select courses that are consistent with State requirements and the student's needs, abilities and interests. In addition, schools should provide guidance services and support that will enable students to attain their goals and achieve their maximum potential.

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*Students who entered grade 9 in September 1985 and graduate prior to June 1989 must meet diploma requirements established for students who entered grade 9 in September 1984.

I. General Principles (continued)

C. Special Education students should be provided with programs designed to give them the support and encouragement necessary to earn a high school diploma. For some students, an individual education program (IEP) diploma may be earne through the achievement of the educational goals specified in their current IEP, as described in section XII of this Regulation.

D. Students with limited English proficiency should be assigned to instructional programs designed to maximize their achievement potential and should be given the encouragement and support necessary to earn a high school diploma. Programs must provide limited English proficient (LEP) students with an opportunity to satisfy the eight (8) required English credits through intensive English as a Second Language (ESL) classes. These classes, which are specifically designed for non-native speakers of English, stress the integration of the four (4) language skills: listening, speaking, writing and reading. Schools with 20 or more students in a grade level speaking a common language must, in addition to ESL, provide students with substantive subject area instruction in their native language. (Schools with fewer than 20 students in a grade speaking a common language have the option of providing students with the above-noted instruction.)

E. It is essential that students acquire greater insight into and an understanding of the values of a democratic society and the place of aesthetics and the intellect in modern life. Equally important is an understanding of the significance of good interpersonal relations, the impact of science and technology on the emerging world and the nature of the decision-making process.

F. In addition, given the multi-lingual/multi-cultural nature of the New York City community, the study of second languages is also fundamental to increasing students' awareness and understanding of the cultures and traditions of other peoples.

G. Students should be provided with opportunities and instruction to enable them to explore and identify their values, interests and aptitudes to make traditional and non-traditional career and life plans.

H. The ninth and tenth grade years may serve as core years in which courses in required subject areas are pursued. Adjustments should be made to meet the student's needs as well as to accommodate those who have already identified their goals and areas of concentration.

I. General Principles (continued)

I. In order to develop opportunities for career orientation, alternative school programs and employment placement, schools should establish relationships with colleges, businesses, industry, labor and other public and private institutions.

J. Students should be given opportunities to participate in in-school and out-of-school alternative programs provided that the program is consistent with the goals of the high school curriculum and with instructional time requirements. Alternative programs are subject to the final review of the High School Division.

K. In light of changing population patterns, employment opportunities and technological development, high school diploma requirements will be subject to periodic review in order to prepare students to enter the job market and take full advantage of their post-secondary education.

II. Definitions

A. Unit of Study

A unit of study consists of a minimum of 180 minutes of instruction per week throughout the school year or the equivalent.

B. Area of Concentration

An area of concentration consists of a sequence of courses which permits the student to both broaden and deepen his/her knowledge of a subject.

C. Occupational Education

Occupational education refers to programs of instruction in agriculture, business, marketing, health, home economics, industrial arts/technology and trade and technical subjects.

III. Basic Requirements, Sequences, Concentrations and Electives for the Local Diploma

All areas of concentration are of equal worth. A student may not, however, select physical education as his/her area of concentration. Placement in a particular course/subject should not in any way be affected by a student's choice of a particular area of concentration.

A student may use elective credits to augment an area of concentration, complete a second area of concentration, fulfill unit requirements or to study a variety of unrelated subjects.

A student should have the opportunity to change his/her area of concentration to another related or unrelated area if the student's personal goals have changed or if the original choice was unsatisfactory. Seniors shall also have this opportunity, although it may necessitate their earning additional credits. Schools shall permit such changes on an individualized basis provided they are consistent with the student's guidance and educational needs. There should be sufficient flexibility so that, whenever possible, courses that have been successfully completed can be used in the creation of a new area of concentration or for an elective area.

The following sets forth requirements for the local diploma. Where special requirements exist for Regents endorsement, please see the notations indicated and Section X., Part C of this Regulation. The listing of basic requirements for graduation should not preclude schools from encouraging students to take additional work beyond the minimum.

III. (continued)

A. Basic Unit Requirements

Basic Unit Requirements		Units
English		4
Communication Arts, including a continued emphasis on listening, speaking, reading and writing. Students who are limited English proficient are required to receive English as a Second Language.		
Social Studies		4
Global Studies	2 units	
American History	1 unit	
Economics	1/2 unit	
Participation in Government	1/2 unit	
Science		2
Mathematics		2
Art		1/2
Music		1/2
Second Language		1
(For Regents endorsement three (3) units of a second language are a requirement)		
Health and Physical Education		1/2
Health Education	1/2 unit	
Physical Education (In accordance with the regulations of the State Education Department)		
Subtotal		14 1/2

III. (continued)

Units

B.. Combinations, Concentrations and Free Electives

2-5

1. Completion of three (3) unit sequences in two (2) occupational education subjects* or in two (2) second languages or in any two (2) of the following areas of concentration:

Mathematics
Science
Second Language (For Regents endorsement, the first three (3) units of a second language are a basic requirement; they may not be used as an area of concentration unless combined with two (2) additional units)
Art
Music
Occupational Education OR

2. Completion of a three (3) unit sequence in any one (1) of the following areas of concentration
Mathematics
Science
Second Language (For Regents endorsement, the first three (3) units of a second language are a basic requirement; they may not be used as an area of concentration unless combined with two (2) additional units)
Art
Music
Occupational Education and
a five unit sequence in
English or
Social Studies OR

*For students entering grade 9 in September, 1988 and thereafter, the option of using three (3) unit sequences in two (2) occupational education subjects is eliminated.

III. B. (continued)

3. Completion of a five (5) unit sequence in any one of the following areas of concentration:

Mathematics
Science
Second Language (A student selecting a sequence of five (5) units of credit in a single language may use the first three (3) units to meet the Regents endorsement requirement.)

Occupational Education
Art
Music

4. Electives 1/2-3 1/2

TOTAL 20

PLEASE NOTE: Each three (3) or five (5) unit sequence taken in English, social studies, science, mathematics, art, music and a second language includes the basic unit requirements described in Section III, Part A. For Regents endorsement, the first three (3) units of a second language are a basic requirement which may be applied toward the completion of a five (5) unit second language sequence only.

Additional information on the second language requirement and occupational education is contained in Section VI.

I. (continued)

C. Required Competency Tests

1. General Requirements

The New York State Competency Examination Program shall be administered as mandated by the State. In order to graduate, students shall be required to attain the established level of competency on each examination. The examinations required are as follows:

Reading:	Students are initially eligible to take the test in January of grade 11.
Writing:	Students are initially eligible to take the test in January of grade 11.
Mathematics:	Students are initially eligible to take the test in June of grade 9.
Science:	The first test administration is in June, 1988. Students who entered grade 9 in September, 1987 and thereafter are initially eligible to take the test in June of grade 9.
American History:	The first test administration is in June, 1989. Students who entered grade 9 in September, 1986 and thereafter are eligible to take the test in June of grade 11.
Global Studies:	The first test administration is in June, 1990. Students who entered grade 9 in September, 1988 are initially eligible to take the test in June of grade 10.

III. (continued)

C. Required Competency Tests

2. Students should be encouraged to meet competency test requirements by passing the parallel Regents examinations. Students may also meet competency test requirements in reading, writing and mathematics by attaining the SAT/ACT Verbal/Mathematics scores established by the State Education Department.

3. In addition to competency tests and Regents examinations, other standardized, citywide and/or comprehensive tests may be administered for the purpose of assessing student achievement.

4. Alternative Competency Tests for Students With Limited English Proficiency

   The Commissioner's Regulations permit all students, including students with special educational needs, whose native language is other than English and who first entered an English language school system after grade eight, to demonstrate basic competencies through alternative procedures as follows:

   a. English language proficiency as measured on an English language proficiency assessment instrument (CREST Test);

   b. native language proficiency in reading and writing at a level comparable to the requirements of the English competency tests in reading and writing (native language writing tests or comprehensive second language Regents);

   c. mathematical skills on a mathematics competency examination in the native language at a level comparable to the requirements of the mathematics competency examination in English (Native Language Math RCT); and

II. (continued)

C.4. Required Competency Tests

d. skills in other subject areas indicated in Section III, Part C. 1 of this Regulation on the basis of alternative procedures and examinations to be provided by the State Education Department.

Limited English proficient students are eligible to take the competency test in each subject area within the same time frame as that indicated in Section III., Part C.1.

5. Alternative Testing Techniques for Certain Pupils with Handicapping Conditions

In recognition of the special testing needs of some handicapped students, the Commissioner's Regulations provide for alternative testing techniques. High school principals are authorized to use alternative testing in the administration of the required New York State Competency examinations to test students with handicapping conditions. The need for use of such testing procedures must be reflected in the student's individual education program (IEP).

V. Grading Criteria

A. Minimum Passing Grade

The minimum passing grade for each subject shall be 65%.

B. Weight of Examinations

Test results may be considered as part of the final grade in a current course in a specific subject area but may not be the sole basis for determining whether the student passes the course or is issued a high school diploma.

C. The High School Average

The "high school average" is the average of all final marks in all courses credited to the student in high school grades 9-12 (including courses taken in the middle schools for which high school credit is granted) except those final marks in required Physical Education.

V. Attendance

Regular attendance is required of students in accordance with State law and Board of Education policies, regulations and directives.

VI. Additional Information on the Second Language Requirement

A. Single Language Requirement

Any three (3) or five (5) units of credit in a second language, whether used as an area of concentration or for Regents endorsement, must consist of courses in a single language (except as described in paragraph E. 2. of this section).

B. Awarding of Second Language Credit in Special Situations

Students may be awarded second language unit credit in the following situations:

1. one (1) unit of second language Regents credit for each year of successful participation in a native language arts program in grades 8-12.

2. up to three (3) units of second language Regents credit for each year of documented school attendance in a non-English speaking school system and residence in an other than English speaking environment provided that the experience occurred at age 10 or older and that residence resulted in direct contact with the environment and its people. A maximum of five (5) units of credit may be granted. No credit may be awarded for residence in a bilingual home within an English speaking environment.

3. one unit of second language Regents credit for students who pass the Second Language Proficiency Test.

C. Special Education Students

1. An American Sign Language test may be used to satisfy the second language requirement, based on the IEP, in situations where students are hearing impaired.

VI. (continued)

C. Second Language Requirement/Special Education

2. Students with handicapping conditions may be excused from the second language requirement if the IEP indicates that this requirement is not appropriate to the special education needs of the student.

D. Vocational-Technical High School Waiver Request

The second language requirement will be in effect in all vocational-technical high schools. Options to the second language requirement may be requested by the high school principal and must be reviewed and approved by the executive director of the High School Division.

E. Second Language Exemptions for Certain Students Seeking Regents Endorsement

1. Students seeking Regents endorsement who enter grade 9 from September, 1985 through September 1989 and select a five (5) unit sequence in occupational education, art or music may substitute another three (3) unit sequence in place of the second language requirement. Students seeking Regents endorsement who enter grade 9 in September, 19[illegible] and thereafter must meet the second language requirement regardless of their area of concentration.

2. Students who transfer between high schools in grade 11 or 12 may be exempt from the second language requirement for Regents endorsement if the language in which the students began a second language sequence in grade 9 or 10 is not offered in the school to which the student was transferred. In such cases, the student shall complete the units required for Regents endorsement in second languages but not necessarily in a single language.

VII. Additional Information on Occupational Education

Course credit toward the diploma may be granted for appropriate occupational education studies prior to grade 9. Students first entering grade 9 in 1987 and thereafter and taking an approved occupational education sequence must pass the appropriate occupational proficiency examination, where available.

VIII. Credit for Accelerated Courses

Students are to be granted course credit for accelerated subjects taken prior to grade 9 in which they passed the appropriate proficiency test or Regents examination in accordance with the guidelines outlined in Chancellor's Memorandum #36 issued on April 16, 1986.

IX. Credit Earned Outside of the Traditional Classroom Setting

A. Students currently attending school or who received substantially equivalent instruction elsewhere may earn up to 6 1/2 units of credit toward the local or Regents endorsed diploma without completing units of study for such units of credit if, based on the student's past academic record, the superintendent, or his/her designee, determines that the student will benefit academically; the student passes an oral examination or successfully completes a special project to demonstrate proficiency in the subject matter area as determined by the principal; and the student achieves a score of at least 85% on a State-developed or State-approved examination.

B. Students may also earn such units of credit for participation in alternative in-school and out-of-school programs provided that the program is consistent with the goals of the high school curriculum and with instructional time requirements. In such cases, a written explanation outlining the responsibilities of the participants, the credit requirements and the evaluation techniques that will be utilized should be discussed with the student. Program advisors must also meet with students regularly in order to evaluate their progress and to provide instruction where necessary. Credit for alternative programs may be granted by the principal only after student

X. (continued)

participation and achievement have been evaluated as satisfactory. In making this assessment, schools may use a written examination, an oral examination or other acceptable demonstration of proficiency. Written examinations shall be administered where available.

Endorsements

A. Merit Endorsement

Students who meet the requirements for graduation and achieve a high school average of 80% but less than 90% will receive a "Merit" endorsement.

B. Honor Endorsement

Students who meet the requirements for graduation and achieve a high school average of at least 90% will receive an "Honor" endorsement.

C. Regents Endorsement

Students entering grade 9 in September, 1985 and 1986 must pass Regents examinations in English, American History and Government, a second language, Mathematics, (two (2) years with two (2) Regents); Science (two (2) years with two (2) Regents); and subject(s) selected as area(s) of concentration. In addition, students entering grade 9 in September, 1987 and thereafter, must pass a Regents examination in Global Studies; and, if a sequence in an Occupational Education subject was used to meet graduation requirements, the appropriate occupational education proficiency examination.

Examinations for Regents credit are to be administered to students whose area of concentration is in an occupational education subject for which there is no Regents examination by following procedures described in High School Memorandum #119, dated March 24, 1986, "Procedures for Local School Exams to be Used to Claim Regents Credit-Occupational Education."

X. (continued)

D. Regents Endorsement with Honor

Students who earn an average of at least 90% in all Regents examinations taken to meet the Regents endorsement requirement shall be granted Regents endorsement with Honor.

A student who is unable to take the Regents examination because of extraordinary circumstances and who has successfully completed the Regents course of study for the subject may be granted Regents credit if he/she obtains the minimum score established by the State Education Department on achievement examinations administered by the College Entrance Examination Board and the American College Testing Program in the following subjects: English, social studies; mathematics; second languages; biology; chemistry; or physics.

E. School Citizenship Endorsement

Students whose record of attendance, punctuality, school service and concern for others is exemplary shall receive an endorsement in school citizenship. Each school should provide its students with specific guidelines informing them of the qualifications for this endorsement.

XI. Recognition of Achievement Beyond Basic Requirements

Schools may recognize levels of achievement beyond the basic requirements by so indicating on diplomas and transcripts, and by awarding special certificates. Certificates issued must be in addition to, rather than in lieu of, the standardized diploma. No diploma may be withheld due to a student's failure to seek and/or earn any such recognition.

XII. Individual Education Program Diploma

Students in special education programs have the option of remaining in high school for as long as it takes them to complete successfully the required units for a diploma or until the end of the school year in which their 21st birthday occurs, whichever is earlier.

A. Special Education Students Who Have Reached Their 21st Birthday

A high school IEP diploma shall be awarded to a student with a handicapping condition at the end of the school year in which the student's twenty-first birthday occurs where the student has achieved the educational goals specified in the student's current individualized education program.

B. Special Education Students Who Have Completed 12 Years of Schooling Beyond Kindergarten

Upon application of a student or his/her parent, an IEP diploma may be awarded to a student who has attended school or, who has received a substantially equivalent education elsewhere for at least 12 years, excluding Kindergarten, and who has achieved the educational goals in the current individual education program. However, if the recipient is less than 21 years of age, the diploma must be presented with a statement of assurance that the recipient is eligible to attend the public high schools until the student has earned a high school diploma or until the end of the school year in which the student's twenty-first birthday occurs, whichever is earlier.

C. Annotation on Diploma

The IEP diploma must be clearly annotated on the front to indicate that the award is based on the student's successful achievement of the educational goals specified in the student's current individualized education program as recommended by the Committee on Special Education.

II. (continued)

D. Certificates

Please refer to Chancellor's Regulation A-503 dated May 20, 1986 describing the issuance of certificates for Special Education students.

III. Transfer Students

A. Principals shall award students who enter New York City high schools for the first time after ninth grade appropriate units of credit towards a local diploma based on the student's past academic record as indicated in the student's transcript.

B. All students who first enter a New York City high school in grades 9 or 10 must meet the Regents competency test requirements. Principals shall review the transcripts of students first entering a New York City high school in grade 11 or 12 to determine whether these requirements must be met. A principal may exempt such students from the Regents competency test requirements for tests ordinarily taken and passed before the date of the student's transfer.

C. Student's seeking Regents endorsement who transfer between high schools in grade 11 or 12 may be eligible for second language exemption as described in Section VI., Part E.2 of this Regulation.

ConCurrent Options Programming

School Year 1988-1989 Survey

Prepared By: Joseph R. Salvati
August 1989

Observations and Recommendations

Observation 1

The number of students programmed for supplemental options is growing significantly. With recognized limitations, these opportunities are a major resource in helping to maintain and eventually graduate students who are drop-out risks because of their limited progress. At neither the school, Superintendent nor Division level is their a clear handle on the nature and extent of this type of programming.

Recommendation

Each school should be required to provide on a semester basis the number of students programmed for each type of option.

.PM classes
.Independent Study
.Evening/Summer School
.Work Experience
.Shared Instruction
.Community Based Organizations(training)
.Adult Education
.College Options

Observation 2

ConCurrent Options is a "menu of supplemental programming possibilities" to aid schools in addressing the needs of overage for grade students. It is neither a defined course of study, nor block scheduling, nor other highly structured and uniform program. Staff at many schools have demonstrated considerable difficulty accepting ConCurrent Options as a creative resource. While many schools proclaim "give us the tools and we will do the job", most seem more comfortable with "top-down" guidelines and restrictions.

Recommendations

(A) We must recognize that making significant change is a long term process. Since counselors are our primary agents in the school, we should continue our staff development efforts at this grass roots level. This summer. experienced counselors developed a handbook for ConCurrent Options programming. This document will be the focus of our training program this year, however, this is not enough. All appropriate Division of High Schools, Superintendents and school level training and organizational meetings must "drive home" the mission of ConCurrent Options.

(B) Regular school visits and evaluations of schools by Superintendent level personnel should include a review of each school's use of ConCurrent Options resources. Those schools that made a commitment for funding must be held accountable to supervisors. Schools not appropriately utilizing supplemental funding should lose it. There is too great a temptation to use these funds to resolve other unrelated school issues.

(C) No new funding should be allocated to any school unless that school has a clearly defined plan of operation and agrees to make a commitment of their own human and budgetary resources necessary to make ConCurrent Options programming effective.

Observation 3

The less traditional options (adult education, CBOs, college options, mentoring/internship, independent study, etc.) have currently attracted relatively small numbers of students. In discussing the issue with counselors, it is clear that this type of option requires more work to arrange and more of a willingness to "experiment" with something new. If the process for accessing these options was easier-more students would now be participating.

Recommendations

(A) Since all of our counselors agree that these non-traditional educational options can benefit many students, it is necessary for us to make participation an easier process. Clearly, we can build upon what is already planned for the 1989-1990 school year.

1. 18 adult education programs
2. A directory of available community based organizations willing to provide training and/or mentoring/internships.
3. A model college option program to be implemented in 1 to 5 colleges.

(B) To encourage more schools to offer "non-traditional" options to appropriate students we must insist upon a high standard. Superintendent and Division level personnel must insist that all guidelines for granting course credit are followed. It should not be left to the "skeptics and critics" to uncover a school "giving away" credits.

Observation 4

Vocational school shared instruction is now primarily under the control of the school. To institutionalize this new approach to providing part-time intruction the program must become an extension of the full-time program.

Recommendations

(A) ConCurrent Options/Shared Instruction at vocational schools should be promoted and budgeted as an ongoing extension of the regular full-time program. To ensure quality, continuity and greater accessibility, specific steps can be taken.

1. Shared instruction programs can be described as part of the school's profile in the regular High School Directory.
2. Staffing for the shared instruction program (which can overlap the day program) should be organized as part of the school's overall staffing plan.
3. Budgeting for shared instruction should be a part of the regular school budget-following the same timelines and procedures.

(B) At the request of the those responsible for special needs populations (Special Education-L.E.P.) an evaluation should be conducted to determine if special shared instruction classes are necessary. It has been suggested that certain segments of the special education and LEP student populations require self contained classes.

Observation 5

The Computer Assisted Instruction (CAI) Networked Labs offer major benefits in solving "make-up work" problems with large numbers of students. The technology will enable each school to "fill-in the gaps of missed instruction" as well as to enhance and individualize routine classroom learning. While we have introduced this technology in more than 25 high schools, the high costs of hardware, software and networking threaten an expansion of the program.

Recommendation

In an effort to cut costs for Networked CAI Labs, certain measures can be taken.

1. Approve lab installations only in schools who are willing to convert an existing MAC or VIP room.
2. Allow a maximum of $12,000 to upgrade existing rooms with the necessary work stations.
3. Schools that select more expensive software packages should contribute some of their software OTPS funds to lessen the Division's contributions.

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